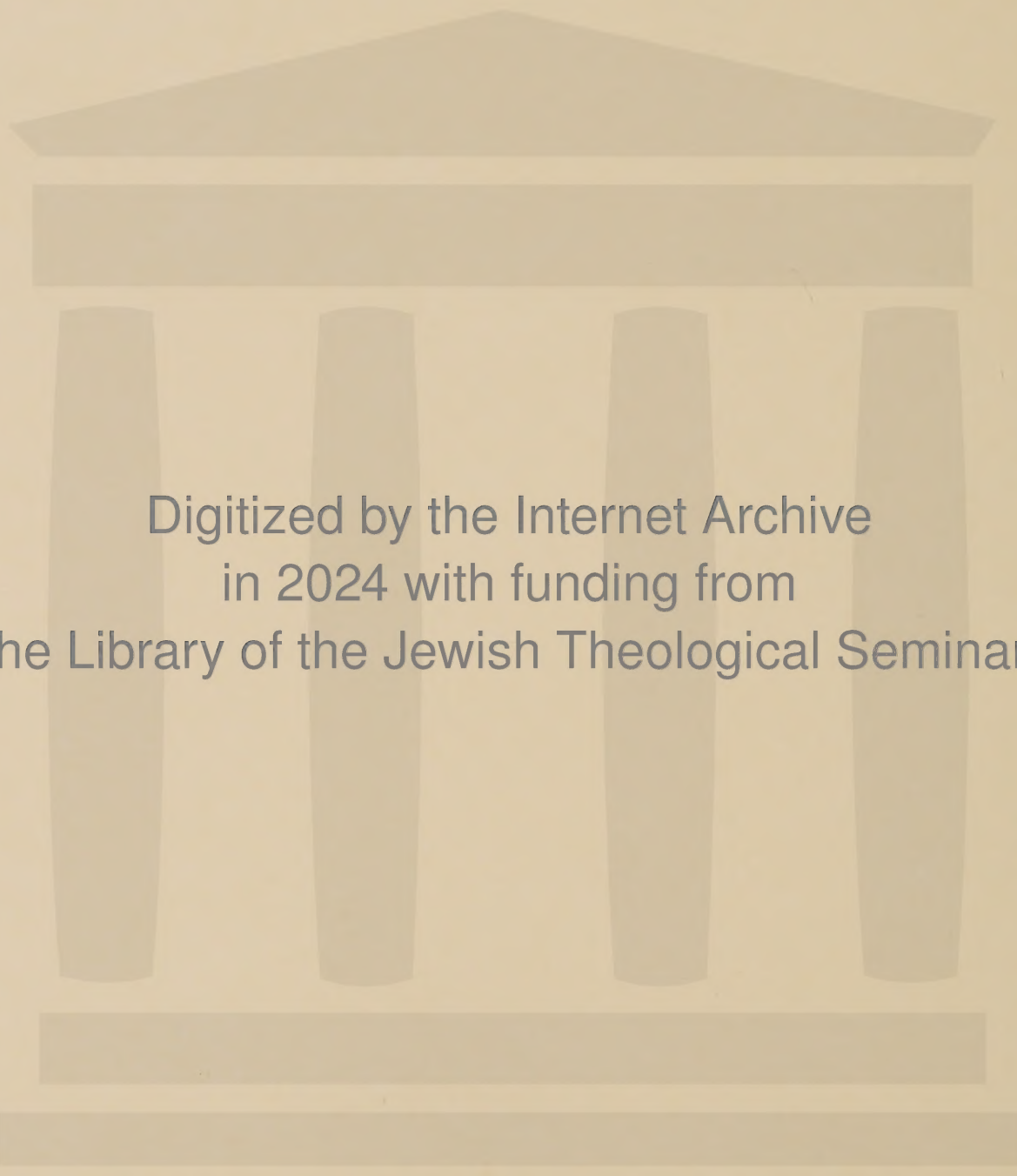


M. KAPLAN DIARIES - TRANSCRIPTIONS

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Friday, June 29, 1928

Last Wednesday I went for a second time to Long Branch to read my paper on Judaism as a Civilization at the convention of the Rabbinic Assembly. I embodied in that paper most of what I had read at the second conference of the Midwest Council of the SAJ about the distinction between personal and folk religion. I doubt whether I would have cared to broach that view a few years ago, or whether I would even have done it this year if Ginzberg had not left for Europe. I confess that the apprehension that Adler would be present and attack me for holding such views had been in the back of my mind. That Adler stayed away from the sessions on that day I believe was by no means unintentional. To day nothing after such a paper would imply either assent or inability to refute the ideas I set forth. On the other hand he evidently does not cherish the notion of getting into polemics with me. He escaped this dilemma by not coming at all ~~any~~ though I understand he is spending the summer somewhere in the vicinity of Long Branch. Yet I may be mistaken.

In the course of my reading the paper I made the statement about the 3v being treated merely as folkways which should not be dealt with in the same legalistic spirit as the civil law. Drob, who was the chairman of the meeting, and who delights to play the part of the heresy hunter, whispered to me that I should repeat that statement so that the listeners might take note of the full extent of my heresy. I disregarded him, but the antagonism he displayed annoyed me. I felt that quite a few in the audience agreed with him. When I got through the question arose whether the paper should be discussed. Drob tried to choke off discussion, but had to concede to the wishes of the majority to allow a half hour for discussion. Hoffman (Senior) delivered a tirade in which he intimated that views such as expressed in the paper were incompatible not only with what

the Rabbinic Assembly and the Seminary stood for, but with traditional and historical Judaism. He was followed by Jacob Kohn who while approving the modernist approach, implied in the paper, took strong exception to my treating Jewish religion as a phase of the Jewish civilization. While considerably superior in his thinking to most of the men in the Assembly, he is nevertheless too obsessed by preconceptions to acknowledge the value of a new idea proposed by a colleague. The two other men that raised questions contributed nothing to the discussion. I was given a chance to answer the objections. Toward the end of my remarks I let myself go and talked with a good deal of warmth. Whenever Chertoff hears me speak in that vein he remarks "I like to hear you when you get angry."

Yesterday the Conference called for the purpose, as I had hoped, of forming an Eastern Council of the SAJ. took place at the SAJ House. The call, similar in character to the one which preceded the Conference in Chicago, had been signed by Benderly, Karpf, Henry Hurwitz, Israel Levinthal, Eugene Kohn and myself. Of the 75 men written to about 45 attended and 15 sent in replies regretting their inability to come and expressing a desire to learn more about the movement. The meeting was called for 10 but did not open until 11. The discussion turned upon the question how far it was essential for those representing the different interests in Jewish spiritual life to get together what they could thus do for one another and for the community. Right there and then the rabbis found fault with the so-called "intellectualists" and the latter pointed out the duty which the Rabbis owed to themselves and to the community to create a place in Jewish life for free creative thinking.

Everything ran along smoothly until the time came for crystallizing into some concrete form what all acknowledged to be a desider-

atum. Instad of allowing those there to organize themselves into a body to be known as the Eastern Council of the SAJ, Benderly suggested the postponement of the organization so as to effect a better balance between the rabbinic and the elements in the group. He was evidently annoyed by the preponderance of rabbis. Moreover the identification with the SAJ was to him objectionable, because he cannot dissociate that name from the group of simple minded laymen who at present constitute the Society. My attempt to emphasize the fact that this group calls itself the Congregation of the SAJ and that the SAJ is a movement and not a specific organization was of no avail. With this objection which Benderly raised he played into the hands of Jacob Kohn who would naturally obstruct any thing I might propose. The meeting ended with the decision to have a committee of nine formulate a plan of organization and call a conference when ready.

* * *

Wednesday, July 4, 1928

Last Thursday night (June 28) the following members of the original Peace and Reconstruction Committee met at the SAJ House: Dr. Louis I. Harris, Emanuel Neumann, Dr. Wechsler, Julius Simon, Miller (of Brooklyn), Jacob Soel, Siegel, Germaine, Maurice Levine (hotel owner on 70 St.), Dr. Poole, Syndney Matz and myself. The call for the meeting had been signed by Dr. Harris, but the main instigator was, I believe, Neumann. As Neumann defined the situation then, there was a possibility for the Peace Committee to make itself felt at the Convention. From what actually happened at the Convention his surmise proved to be absolutely correct. He influenced those present to decide that they would continue their efforts as a Peace Committee and to induce Harris, Poole and me to go to Pittsburgh. I do not think Poole and Harris needed much persuading. But I certainly did, because I knew that it meant postponing the resumption of my own work for another few days, besides considerations of

expense and little likelihood of accomplishing any good. There was one factor that mainly contributed to my yielding to the urging of those present and that was the promise I had given to Weizmann that I would attend the Convention. It is true that I could pacify my conscience with the thought that I had done my share toward achieving what was in Weizmann's mind when he asked me to go to Pittsburgh, but so long as there was a chance of being of use, I dared not ~~salve~~ ^{salve} my conscience with what then be mere sophistry. After all among the principles I had drawn up for the SAJ is one that binds us to keep a promise. How could I face any one or have any self-respect, if I were to argue myself out of that principle? Of course this experience which has cost me more than a month of time besides fifty-five or sixty dollars in money which I can ill afford, will teach me a lesson not to make any promises if I can at all help it. Thank G. that at least in one instance I have so far succeeded in living up to this resolve. J. B. Maximan the present editor of the "Shvilei Ha-Hinukh" has been after me for the last year or two that I should promise him that I would contribute an article for his magazine. Though I had often been tempted to promise him, if only to ~~shake~~ ^{shake} him off, because he sticks like a leech, yet I have succeeded in resisting the temptation.

Last Friday Julius Simon called me up and told me that he had been informed by Weisgal the editor of the New Palestine that Weizmann had cabled to the administration that they should support Lipsky, for the presidency. Simon offered to cable Weizmann to ask him whether that was true. Foolishly I undertook to do that myself, believing that I would be more certain to get a reply than Simon. I accordingly cabled the following: Rumor you urge support of Lipsky. Judge findings condemn Lipsky. I have not received any reply. Being

eager to find a valid excuse for not going to Pittsburgh, I thought I might find it in the fact that Weizmann failed to answer my cable. But then it was the realization that I was looking for subterfuge to escape the duty of keeping my word that decided me to attend the Conference.

I arrived at Pittsburgh on Sunday morning and went to the William Penn Hotel where a room had been reserved for me. Before long a number of delegates (about 50) were coralled into one of the larger rooms. For a while it looked as though we would be listening to a long debate about Lipsky. ^{of} Rudavsky ~~for~~ Fall River delivered a long speech. Neumann proceeded to answer him with another long speech. I cut the meeting short by asking those present to authorize the Peace Committee to write to each of the three parties to the controversy, the Administrative, the ^{Madassah} and the Opposition, asking them to send representatives, five, three and two respectively to meet with five of our committee to work out some plan of adjustment.

I had three letters sent to Lipsky, Mrs. Szold and Judge Mack respectively, asking them to appoint representatives to meet our committee.

In the afternoon the Convention held its first session, I came in as the crowd was cheering wildly for Lipsky. I stood in the middle of the hall far from the platform until Lipsky got through with his speech. His address was a piece of masterly writing. He practically made no reference to the controversy. When he was through he announced my presence and asked me to come up to the platform. Then came the nominations for chairmen of the convention and Wise's demonstration of his passion to be in the limelight.

The Administration appointed as its five representatives Messrs. Abe Goldberg, Dr. Rongy, Lief Goldstein (of New England) Freiburger, and a sixth man who spoke in the name of a large contingent of delegates, Leo Wolfsohn. The Hadassah appointed Mrs. Szold, Mrs. Kross and a third woman whose name I don't know. Mack and Tulin represented the Opposition. On our committee there were Siegel, Goel, Dr. Wechsler, Neumann, Katz and Miller. Harris and Poole arrived Monday morning. Fortunately there was no difficulty raised on the point of number on our committee. The conference began at 10:30 in room 121 and lasted till 2:30. Before I began Mack remarked that there was a fourth party that consists of one man and that ought to have been represented at this conference. That party consists of Wise.

The discussions dealt at first with the question of reorganization. It looked as though there would not be any serious difficulty in composing the differences between the rival groups. But as soon as the Lipsky issue was raised we landed in a cul de sac. Tulin whose voice had become hoarse from talking and shouting the day before together with Mack who most of the time spoke with such frenzy that I feared he burst a blood vessel would not even dream of permitting Lipsky to be considered for any position on the Administrative Committee of forty.

While our meeting was going on, Poole and Harris went out to address a large caucus of about 300 - probably 150 - delegates - and when Harris returned he sent me the following note: "The temper of several hundred delegates whom I addressed upstairs indicates that our small committee headed by yourself will have the opportunity to do what we think is right. I am sure now we hold the balance of power." A number of delegates were gathered in the hall near our room asking to make representations to us in behalf of the need of

some peace plan. In the meantime, it became evident that no agreement could possibly be reached between the contending factions. Our committee therefore decided to treat only with the representatives of the Administration. We went to another room and deliberated upon the plan we should return with to the representatives of the administration. It was then that I was handed the letter with the seven signatories referred to above. The letter was signed by seven delegates representing the large caucus that had been addressed by Poole and Harris was handed to me requesting the Peace Committee to bring in some concrete plan and pledging unqualified support. Among the signatories was the Chairman of that caucus Harry Davidowitz, and Simon Greenberg, both former students of mine at the Seminary, and possessed of that same psychology which leads them to act as though the shortest distance between two points was a zig-zag. (Greenberg especially is a man I can never fathom. Ever since I have known him from the Teachers Institute he would always show himself both deferrent and offensive toward me. He is of an aggressive type, and quite able. If he had also been intellectually honest he could have been of great help in removing the moral poisons that inhere in the system of Jewish life.)

We decided to go back with the plan of an Exec. Committee of nine who, with an additional 31 would constitute the Administrative Committee of the ZOA. In addition, the National Executive council should remain. As to Lipsky, we agreed that we would not permit him to be one of the nine, but one of the thirty-one.

We then returned to room 121 where the representatives of administration had been waiting for us and brought them our plan. After debating the plan for about two and a half hours (about 5 o'clock) we modified it somewhat. Lipsky was to be the chairman of the National Executive instead of on the Administrative committee.

The representatives of the Administration then retired to lay our plan before the Administrative Committee and to get Lipsky to be satisfied with the presidency of the National Executive of 150. (It was then that sandwiches were brought to our room and we had our luncheon.) After a while they came back and reported that they were given full power to cooperate with us in arriving at a plan of organization and solving the problems as to the status of Lipsky. "Although I had to do a good deal of persuading, arguing and at times assuming an authoritative tone, an agreement was reached and the situation looked hopeful. It was decided that I should come with the plan before the convention at the session which was to be held that Monday night."

I prepared a little talk on peace and went to the convention hall. I soon realized that many delegates, having gotten wind of our plan, were already taking steps to block us. Judge Lewis possibly without any sinister intent, refused to let me speak before asking the constitution committee to bring in its report. I was certain that our suggestions would not be incorporated in the report of the constitution committee since we had not even had a chance of handing them in. For them to render a report at that time would have meant the complete nullification of our efforts. This got me very angry and I went back to my room. In a few minutes I was called for and gave my talk on peace. Acting upon the suggestion of Lipsky who was on the platform, I did not state the specific changes that had been worked out, but merely alluded to the fact that in cooperation with the representatives of the Administrative Committee such changes had been worked out, and that the Administrative Committee gave their representatives full authority to accept these changes. Elihu Stone of Boston, a notorious character, then shouted "It's not so." At this interruption Wise rose and asked the chairman (Max

Shulman of Chicago) to rebuke any one who dared to interrupt me.) I went on with my talk which was, I confess rather too homiletic for the occasion. - but what else could I do, since I had to avoid being specific? - but which seemed to please a good many of the delegates. Thereupon Lipsky rose and expressed his satisfaction with our labors and moved that our proposals be referred to the Committee on Constitution. The vote was unanimous.

But the unanimity was only for a moment. The reason in fact I was not able to listen to the motion put by Lipsky is that in my corner of the hall a storm was beginning to brew. Before long it became clear that the crew of die hards and irreconcilables in the administration viewed our plan as a trap to get Lipsky demoted. Elihu Stone and a few of his cohorts then in organized fashion started what almost turned into a riot. There was pandemonion throughout the hall. The session could not continue. The convention broke up into groups that filled the lobbies of the hotel and the rooms of leading delegates shouting, yelling, protesting.

It so happened that having been compelled to remain over longer than I had expected, due to the after effects of my speech, I was given a room next to Lipsky's. A caucus was going on there with one frenzied speech after another against the peace plan. People were banging at my door. I was undressed to go to sleep, but I saw that it would be useless to try to sleep with all that noise going on. I was afraid they might break into my room. The possibility of violence was not remote. I had my room changed to one on the lower floors.

At 9:30 I called up Neumann and learned from him that "something terrible" had happened during the night. After the main caucus had gone on with its discussion for some time the delegates began to relent in their opposition to the peace suggestions, and Lipsky

still insisting that he would abide by the agreement he had made with the Peace Committee not to run for president of the organization, induced them to be satisfied with having the Constitution Committee meet the Peace Committee and suggest certain modifications giving more power to the National Executive Committee and making its president, who presumably was to be Lipsky, an ex-officio member of the Administrative Committee of forty. Then more than ever it looked as though our efforts had at last borne fruit. Just then a band of delegates led by Weisgal broke into the meeting and informed those present that Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver was told by Tulin that Lipsky better not run for the presidency of the organization, because if he does, he will have the District Attorney after him. Silver hearing this from Tulin communicated it to Fischman of the Jewish Morning Journal with the comment that perhaps Lipsky did commit some misdemeanor which the Opposition has yet not disclosed. How then was it possible to ally Lipsky to refuse to run for the presidency? Such refusal would lead his followers to suspect that perhaps he did commit some illegitimate act or take money for his own personal use. When those present at the caucus heard this they lost all self-control and became hysterical. Men, strong and powerfully built men began to weep like children. They rushed into Lipsky's bedroom and begged and pleaded that he should permit them to draft him for the presidency. All this Neumann reported to me on the 'phone. All our work was brought to nought in the twinkling of an eye.

At 10:30 Tuesday our committee met again in room 121 to consider what to do next. We decided to find out from Mack and Tulin what ground there was for the rumor. Neumann, Foole and myself went up to Tulin's room where we found him with Mack. Tulin was in his pajamas hardly able to utter a syllable, and Mack was sitting on Tulin's bed with his face all aflame with excitement. Upon our

xi2

asking Mack what he had to say about the rumor he delivered in a loud and excited voice the statement that he was going to make immediately upon the reopening of the convention. The statement surely did absolve Tulin of any implication that Lipsky would be prosecuted if he would accept the presidency. It also made clear to us that the rumor did grow out of loose and careless talk on Tulin's part, that didn't mean anything. Silver is taking hold of some of these loose remarks of Tulin and communicating them as serious intent committed wittingly or unwittingly an act that may prove the destruction of Zionism in this country. I for one would consider myself extremely unfortunate to have been a contributory cause to such an outcome. I too heard Tulin make such remarks. Rosalsky quoted to me "azanski's statement that in his opinion Lipsky must have signed many more notes besides those brought out in the hearings. But I hope I have enough common sense to discount such remarks.

While we were talking with Mack, or rather while he was rehearsing to us what he would say to the convention, there was a loud banging on the door, and a delegate rushed in saying that a meeting presided over by Judge Hartman was taking place in the convention hall and that the delegates were insistent upon Mack's coming to them with some statement. Judge Hartman had been working them into a frenzy and Rabbi Max Heller was assisting him. Mack sent back word that he would make an explanation to the full convention. Another messenger came with the same demand and received the same reply.

Believing that Mack's statement would appease the crowd we hoped that our plan might go through after all. We went back to room 121 where we met the Constitution Committee headed by Rudansky. The few points of difference were obviated and the Constitution Committee promised to bring in the plan as the one that was arrived at

by the Peace Committee in cooperation with the representatives of the Administrative Committee and accepted by the Committee on Constitution. I then wrote a letter to Lipsky, apprising him of our interview with Mack and of our having come to an understanding with the committee on Constitution, and adding that I considered the agreement whereby he consented to accept the presidency of the National Executive committee as unimpaired. The letter was delivered to Lipsky.

When the Tuesday afternoon session opened the Constitution Committee read the proposed changes which we had worked out. To my surprise and shock Ruttenger (of Brooklyn) Deputy Police Commissioner who evidently now represented the forces that were determined to elect Lipsky to the presidency, brought in a set of counter proposals according to which the office of presidency of the organization would be returned. A short debate followed. There was hardly any one to say a good word for our plan. I was given a chance to say a few words in its defence. The delegates were in no mood to listen. They demanded that a vote be taken. More than two thirds voted in favor of the Ruttenger proposals. That meant finis to all hopes for peace.

The more I reflect upon what turned the tide against us the more I am convinced that it was a deliberate trick carefully planned and dramatically staged by the few desperate characters in the organization. I would not trust my life to men like Elihu Stone and Weissgl. They are prepared to introduce strong arm methods to achieve their ends. Unfortunately the Opposition's skirts are not clean either. I feel very uncomfortable in the presence of men like De Haas and Tulin. I can as little conceive men of such physiognomy being identified with an idealistic movement as I can conceive camels flying. Moreover the movement has drawn in women who use it as an

outlet for their social aspirations. Mrs. Silverman of Providence is one of them. She had the impudence to tell me when I said that I shall not work with the incoming administration, that those who refuse to work with whatever administration is in power are not good Zionists. She immediately began broadcasting what I said, Ephraim Caplan came afterwards to ask me to confirm or deny that statement. As I am writing this it occurs to me that it might be advisable to keep alive the committee on Peace and Reconstruction for the purpose of cleaning the Zionist organization of rowdies and blackmailers. This must be done and done immediately, otherwise the Zionist movement will lead to the greatest scandals in Jewish life.

Again I am confronted with the need of making a momentous decision. Before I left for the convention I almost made up my mind to discontinue the SAJ Review so as to get a chance to put into shape for publication the material which I already have. The effect of the convention has been to shake my belief in the worthwhileness of the tremendous exertions to make Jewish life possible in America. If the one last spiritual resort, Zionism, should prove to be the occasion for eliciting the worst possible traits of character, what reason is there to believe that Jewishness can be an influence for ordinary decency, to say nothing of idealism and the higher flights of the spirit? With doubts such as these in my mind, I should either confine myself to the formulation of the methods, best calculated to improve the individual character of the Jew, or assume the attitude of the spectator noting the various crazes to which the human animal is subject, especially patriotisms and folk religions. To keep on in the old rut seems certainly precluded.

Now comes the letter from Rosenthal, in which he says that he is willing to work with me on the terms I mentioned to him. Part of his work was to work out the editorials for the SAJ Review. I have to let him know at once whether the arrangement is final, and here am I torn by doubts and inner conflicts.

Of what earthly use is religion when a man like Wise who is supposedly a teacher of religion, said to me as I met him last night "Silver who thinks is a great man but is not threw a stink bomb into the convention and ran away. The excuse was he had to attend a funeral. He was probably afraid that if he had remained it would have been his own funeral."?

Of what earthly use is philosophy when a man like the great Hermann Cohen would get into a fit and begin swearing at the mention of Lazarus' ~~name~~ name. Nor could he bear the name Spinoza without uttering a curse? So at least I was told by Dr. Sonderling.

* * *

Sunday, July 8, 1928

Lena, Judith and I spent the Sabbath at Benderly's camp. Every time I come in contact with him my faith in the worthwhileness of the Jewish struggle for existence is revived. His indomitable energy, his tremendous driving power, and his inexhaustible resourcefulness may succeed in getting us Jews over the top. There is only one important resource which he has failed to make use of. That failure has prevented his work from gaining the support it deserves. I refer to his temperamental inability to make use of publicity. I shall make it my business to get after him to have articles about his work appear frequently in the Anglo-Jewish press.

He gave so much of his time yesterday to me, Lena and Judith and made every possible endeavor to have us stay near his camp over the summer, that it looks as though we shall have a real pleasant summer for the first time in a number of years.

Two practical suggestions occurred to me in my conversations with him yesterday that I wish to record. One, that the SAJ Chapters make the propaganda for the Jewish Home Institute as one of its main objects. Two, that the contemplated Council of the SAJ sponsor the amateur Hebrew Players Group that is being coached by Kuttai and his wife. I met this couple at Benderly's and was very much impressed by their artistic ability and capacity to build up out of the Hebrew High School boys and girls an excellent amateur Hebrew troupe.

This evening Charles Cowen called. In view of the contradictory reports I have heard about him I take the attitude of

P 45 . In my own contact with him I have always found him an agreeable, conversationalist, a clear thinker and unusually well informed. I must admit that he has influenced me to be more kindly disposed toward the new administration that I was immediately upon my return from Pittsburgh. I was amused to learn from him what transpired the day after I left when my name was suggested as chairman of the National Executive Committee, the post originally intended for Lipsky. Elihu Stone who had been nominated by the nominating committee withdrew in my favor. He was practically forced to do so by the administration group who didn't want to have me defeated by Stone. It was then that Rabbi Heller told them that I had said before I left that I would not be associated with the administration. I am certainly glad he did, because I would have been put into an embarrassing position had I been elected.

Cowen's visit was not just for the sake of spending the evening. He had come straight from Lipsky apparently for the purpose of conciliating me. Lipsky evidently does not want to put himself in the wrong with me for having gone back on his promise not to run for the presidency. I would have been a prig were I to condemn Lipsky

for retracting his promise. I therefore told Cowen to tell Lipsky who is leaving tonight for Europe, that I shall be glad to cooperate with the administration in an unofficial capacity. My only wish is that he should do something to remove the unsavory characters and rough-necks from any authoritative position in the administration.

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Monday, July 9, 1928

I was at luncheon today with the graduates, the old and the new students of the Training School for Jewish Social Workers. I always dread these informal affairs, because I expect to be called upon to say something. To develop a serious idea at such occasions is altogether out of place. In the scorching heat this morning any such attempt on my part would have been fatuous. Although I was fully primed to speak on the advantages from an intellectual standpoint of taking up a scientific study of human adjustments, I succeeded in suppressing what I wanted to say and confined myself to a few inane remarks some of which was supposed to be funny. When I have nothing in particular to say I would be anywhere else in the world except where I am called upon to speak.

The attempt of the students and graduates to work up enthusiasm by singing Yiddish songs was very labored, and to me very painful.

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Wednesday, July 11, 1928

Yesterday I began for the fourth time my course on Judaism with the class at the Training School for Jewish Social Work. Instead of starting as I did in previous years with a discussion of traditional Judaism and the study of the Kuzari, I am prefacing that discussion this year with a survey of the three stages of Judaism, in order to give the students an idea of the evolutionary aspect of

Judaism. The more I reflect on the problem how to get young people to assimilate the content of traditional Judaism without being repelled by what in it to them must sound bizarre, the more convinced I am that they must learn to think of Judaism in terms of an evolutionary process. I deem all the efforts at present expended in the Hebrew schools on teaching the young people to read and speak Hebrew and to know how to read the various texts both ancient and modern, as of little account by reason of the fact that none of that knowledge is integrated with the rest of their cultural life. Such integration is possible provided the content of Judaism is presented as a growth from henotheism to spiritual humanism.

In the course of my talk to the class yesterday I made the point that the differentia in the henotheism of our ancestors which enabled that henotheism to evolve into monotheism found expression in the conception of Yahwah as a jealous god. Nowhere in the study of comparative religion does one meet with this trait in any of the gods. While it is true that monolatrous religions were not unusual, yet the notion that a god would not brook the dividing of allegiance is unknown anywhere except in the religion in Israel. But this is not the main point. The main point is that a people which ascribes such a trait to a god must of necessity be more intense in its religion than those who do not think of ascribing such a trait to a deity. The case of monogamy presents an interesting parallel. Conjugal love is bound to be much more intense and lead to all manner of refinement and sublimation among a monogamous than among a polygamous people, especially where the monogamy is associated with a keen sense of jealousy. Likewise religion is bound to find a richer and more intensive expression among a people whose national deity has the attribute of jealousy ascribed to him.

For a while I permitted myself last night to give way to worry by reason of the financial losses which Lena and I have recently sustained. It looks as though we shall never see any of the \$2000 which Lena in the goodness of her heart sent to my sister Sophie to help her out in a business venture. When my brother-in-law, who as a result of his nervous breakdown, lost his position in Portland, Me., seemed to be unable to find a position Sophie thought of buying a house and renting it out for weddings, bar mizvahs and similar occasions. She needed money. So Lena let her have the \$2000 which we laid aside last year for the purpose of defraying their living expenses. In the meantime Phineas got a position with the Welfare Board. But instead of sending us back the money, Sophie, who had bought stock on margin finding herself pressed to the wall on account of the sudden slump in the market, has been using our money to make good the losses. This she did entirely without our authority and after I had warned her through her son Nathan that I shall have nothing to do with her as long as she will be dealing in stocks.

Unfortunately she has never had the proper upbringing; ^{for} that matter very few Jewish children of the former generation were ever brought up with a view to ethical character. Living as most Jews did a life of fear and oppression unmitigated by any ethical or spiritual religion there was no attention whatever paid to the training of character in the best of homes. The little I know of the small town life in the old country makes me think of it with nothing but disgust. Nor did any spiritual leader arise, including the Elhanans and the Reinesses to raise the moral and spiritual level of the people. Poor as we are today in the things of the spirit we have infinitely more opportunities to live orderly dignified and enlightened lives than did our forbears. I have availed myself of these opportunities. Whatever good there is in me - I shall not adopt the stupidly morbid manner of the ancients and say that I am

a worthless creature, nor yet be so arrogant as to lay claim to more than average decency -- is the result of self-discipline based upon such reading as I have done since my twentieth year. If I had been as unfortunately situated as Sophie I should have had as little sense of proportion and of character as she has, because neither of us had any upbringing. She has nothad a day free from worries about a livelihood, nor has she ever had a chance to acquire the ability to throw off her worries. Not having seen much happiness in her parents' home she thought she would find happiness by yielding to every wish and whim of her ill trained and none too intelligent husband. It is due to his lack of intelligence that he has never attained security. And being almost completely ignorant of the psychological law about compensatory tendencies her whole thought life has been nothing but a series of compensatory beliefs to account for her husband's failure to make good and for her own inability to make the best of bad situations. It is always this one or that one who is seeking to do them injury. And as for her own unhappiness, it is nothing but ill luck. She is a great believer in luck and fate, in pull and influence and puts very little stock in effort and ability. This tendency to exaggerate the place of luck in human life, a tendency that in my opinion is nothing less than idolatrous or atheistic, has of late found expression in the gambler's hope of becoming rich quickly. This has destroyed her morale completely and never having had any experience in business ethics she has apparently no conception of how wrong it was of her to divert without permission the \$2000 given by Lena for such purposes as she had never been authorized to use it for.

I cannot say that I and Lena have been free from this gambler's mania, but of course we have not sinned as grievously as has Sophie. We asked Max to invest about \$30000 in bank stock, Most of

that money we had acquired recently through cashing in my life insurance. Before long it went up to \$35000. Although I felt myself richer by \$5000 and enjoyed the sensation, I was conscience stricken by the fact that the increment was unearned, and hated myself for enjoying that increment. Now as a result of the slump in the market the shares are worth less than what they were bought for. What sort of a life is this I say to myself. Is not possible to live without being continually on edge lest all that you have saved up might be wiped out as though you never had it? This precariousness often gets on my nerves and destroys my mental poise. I am impatiently waiting for the day when I would be able to sell my bank stock and invest the money in safe securities bearing a modest and legitimate interest.

I hope I shall manage to keep such mercenary thoughts as the foregoing from ever again upsetting the more interesting tenor of my thought life.

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Friday, July 13, 1928

Last Wednesday we moved into the little house in Arverne (Beach 70 St.) adjoining Jamaica Bay which Dr. Benderly rented for us. I came there earlier in the day and Lena followed me. I was at once repelled by the uncouth surroundings, the dampness in the house and the owner of the house, a big hulking animal-man who reserved a room for himself in the house and keeps a rusty musket near it. I was not there long when my bones began to ache me and felt generally uncomfortable. Furthermore the thought of having Phineas stay with us and Judith having to leave the house at seven in the morning and staying in at times overnight in the city began to oppress me. So that when night came I decided to beat a retreat to our house in the city. Fortunately Judith had told me the day before

the story of O'Neill's play "Ile." That had the effect of preventing considerations of social disapproval from diverting me from my resolve to do what I thought was for our physical and mental good. Now that we are back home, we are all happy that I had the courage to go through with the unpleasantness always involved in beating a retreat.

I am having a hard time getting started on the article which I have to write for the volume to be issued by the Wieboldt Foundation. The little book by Ephraim Frisch "An Historical Survey of Jewish Philanthropy" practically covers the subject I am expected to write on. It is much better than Schechter's and Kohler's essays on the topic of Jewish philanthropy. I suppose that after a while I shall manage to get through with the task. In the meantime I am not going on with the material that I have. Why did I not refuse the invitation to write? Vanity, I suppose. The desire to see an article by me included in a book that is bound to have a wide circulation.

Beginning to feel as though I was running dry in ideas I took to reading L.P. Jack's Constructive Citizneship. If I had only a modicum of his prolific powers as writer and speaker, I might have made some impression on Jewish life. There is no end to the number of suggestive ideas that he continually pours forth. The idea in particular hit me between the eyes. Deprecating the tendency to engage in social pathology he makes the remark "One danger is lest society, constantly confronted with the tale of its diseases should fall into low spirits about itself, a condition not conducive to the recovery of the patient." This applies with particular force to the method with which I have been in the habit of approaching the Jewish problem. In harping continually upon the present state of our people

as being a malady which is in need of being properly diagnosed before we attempt any cure, I might be hindering the recovery of the patient. If I want to be effective as the social physician of Jewish life, I must change ~~my~~ ^{my} bedside manners (to use an expression of Jack's).

This morning Benderly apprised me of a luncheon meeting to be attended by Unterberg, Rottenberg and Semel for the purpose of considering what they could do to help him to meet the deficit incurred by his camp at Arverne. Semel had suggested that it would help matters if I were to speak to Unterberg about the good work being done by the camp. I called up Unterberg and tried to impress upon him the importance of coming to Benderly's support not only in the matter of the camp, but in general, in all of that Benderly is doing. Unterberg answered that he and his colleagues had refrained from "featuring Benderly" in all these years for fear that they might incur opposition in their efforts to get money. The unspeakable brutality of this attitude is hardly realized by those guilty of it, so lacking in vision and self-respect are these people who are at the head of a movement to arouse an interest in Jewish education.

This afternoon David W. Pearlman came to discuss the question of his accepting the position of executive directorship of the SAJ. It is strange how difficult it is to get men of ability in Jewish work. Very few civic appointments yield the salary that is held out to men of ability in Jewish work, yet a position in a Jewish institution has to go begging. After a good deal of fussing, Pearlman has finally accepted the position. I hope he will be a marked improvement ~~xxx~~ on his predecessors.

* * *

Sunday night, July 29, 1928

I spent the week end at Benderly's camp in Arverne. Leo Honor also came to the camp as he and I had arranged some time before essentially for the purpose of discussing the situation at the Teachers Institute and its relation to the High School classes which the Bureau of Jewish Education is conducting. Honor had led me to believe that Benderly's purpose to take over the ten or fifteen of the best graduates of the High School classes and train them himself without turning them over to the Teachers Institute would bring down the general quality of the students that we are retraining at the Institute. In the first of the series of conversations I had with Benderly this weekend Benderly allayed our fears in that regard. He maintained that it was up to us entirely to admit to the Institute only those students who in our opinion would make good teachers.

Benderly told us of an extremely interesting talk he gave about the middle of June at a gathering of the Faculty and students of Wise's Institute of Religion. In that talk in which he pointed out that the business of the Institute was not to teach Bible and Talmud but an understanding of the problem of Judaism, he had occasion to suggest a practical plan whereby students applying to the Institute of Religion might acquire the knowledge of text and the ability to read and write Hebrew before they entered. He called attention to the possibilities that lay in a camp that would be maintained between June and October. Wise who is very anxious to place his institution on a higher plane was very much intrigued by Benderly's plan and it looks as though he will take steps to carry it out. I cannot conceive such a searching self-criticism being indulged in by our Seminary faculty, nor Adler taking kindly to so ~~an~~ untraditional a plan as utilizing a camp for the purpose of raising the status of the students. What wonders Wise could have achieved with his institution if he had taken the advice of a man like Benderly before

tying up the institution to a professional staff of nine men whom
wise regards as little more than high class *p. 57* !

Saturday morning I gave a sermon in Hebrew. I have begun to overcome my hesitancy to deliver addresses in Hebrew. This is due to the fact that I got into the swing of the Hebrew by reason of the conversation which I carried on with Benderly.

In the afternoon Benderly and I had a talk with Kuttai and his wife about the possibility of their organizing the Hebrew Art Club under the auspices of the SAJ Chapter.

Saturday night I spent with Honor discussing Teachers Institute problems.

Sunday morning Brogin, Benderly, Honor and I took ~~up~~ up again the question of admission of High School graduates to the Teachers Institute. We arrived at some very important decisions. Then Honor and I continued our discussion of specific Institute problems.

In the afternoon Benderly and I discussed general questions of Jewish life.

* * * *

Tuesday night, August 14, 1928

Thank God I just got through revising the article on the Jewish system of charity. It turned out better than I had expected. By that I mean that I succeeded in giving an original turn to the description of Jewish charity in the past and managed to find it an element of relevance to the present approach to the problem of philanthropy.

The weeks during which I worked on the article have sped by without anything of consequence to me having taken place. The wear and tear on my patience with the SAJ is at its height during the summer months. Two board meetings have been held during the last

few weeks at the Brevoort Hotel - Fifth Avenue and 8 Street. Both were poorly attended. At the first meeting I started a great row over the fact that the membership committee had not yet been organized. Albert Rosenblatt promised to act as temporary chairman of such a committee. When the second meeting took place three weeks afterwards, i.e., last Thursday, August 9, there wasn't a sign of Rosenblatt and his committee. The discussion of the amount to be spent for repairs and ventilation soon brought out the shortage of funds. On seeing the Board confronted with this impasse, I took up my usual strain that I wanted to be released from the leadership of the SAJ, followed by the usual reaction that things were not as bad as they looked, and the claim that I was unduly pessimistic. What goaded me on to let off steam again was perhaps the fact that at the Seminary faculty meeting which took place last Tuesday, August 7 Adler mentioned that he wanted the members of the Faculty to let him know definitely before the end of the month whether we would avail ourselves of the opportunity to live in the Faculty house that would be built on the new ground recently acquired by the Seminary. That together with the improved Teachers Institute plans awakened in me a longing to give myself entirely to work with the students of the Institute and the Seminary.

I spent two more Sabbaths at Benderly's camp. Both my conversations with him and the successful negotiations of two twenty-minute sermonettes in Hebrew gave me an added sense of power.

* * *

Wednesday, August 15, 1928

Rabbi Isidor Hoffman called last night. He is the son of Rabbi Charles Isaiah Hoffman (Friedlaender always used to poke fun at the combination "Charles +saiah) and occupies a pulpit in Utica. Although his father is a rabid opponent of my views, young Hoffman

is quite an ardent disciple of mine. He brought me a paper which he wrote for the SAJ Review. It is a defense of the SAJ movement against the charge that it appeals only to the intellectual but has nothing to offer the masses, a charge brought against it by Rabbi Israel Levinthal at the conference held on June 28 and by other men with whom Hoffman has spoken since.

Discussing the attitude of the Seminary Hoffman quoted what Adler had said to him some two or three years ago, when Hoffman found fault with the Seminary for not giving instruction in Pentateuch. "The men are supposed to know the Pentateuch before they enter the Seminary. There is nothing further for them to learn." When Hoffman complained about the fact that the faculty do not exercise any personal influence on the character of the students, Adler replied, "You will admit that I have had wide experience in academic circles, and I tell you that I have never found that learning has anything to do with character. Besides the students are supposed to have their character formed by the time they enter the Seminary."

= Lena and I visited the Siegelsteins today at White Plains. In the evening some of their friends came over to meet us. Among them were a husband and wife and a son of theirs (Helmans) who took us in their machine back to New York. As the son, who was at the wheel was about to start, his mother remarked to him, "Arthur, if you want us to attend the services at the high holidays, you will have to drive slowly" referring to my precious self as in need of being brought home safe, because their entire Judaism depends upon their attending high holiday services at the SAJ.

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Thursday, August 16, 1928

I went to see Dean Russel of Teachers College this afternoon in reference to getting T. C. to grant the students of the Teachers Institute the B.S. after taking two years of general studies at T.C. I had Drs. Benderly and Honor with me. He was surprised to learn that we would require as much as eighty credits (i.e. two years of twenty hours per week) work, when all that would normally be required should be sixty-four. What would he say if he were to learn that we actually demand 132 credits at the present time? He would probably infer that we think very little of our own work, which is actually the case. We certainly value our own courses much less than courses in Latin and Greek and hold the degrees we ourselves award as of little account. One has to be a Rabbi before he can be a Doctor.

Dean Russel at first could not see his way clear to granting the B.S. because T.C. demands of its students two years experience in teaching. But he seemed desirous of meeting us half way because we would be sending about twenty students each year to T.C. if he could find a loophole to get around the requirement of experience in teaching. He also saw in cooperating with us an opportunity to try out the bilingual type of education, which, as he said, is in vogue in many countries throughout the world. He mentioned in particular South America where the children are taught in Spanish in the schools while at home they speak Indian.

In the course of the conversation Benderly alluded to the social evening he, the late Friedlaender, I and the young men who were then associated with the Bureau and doing special work with Friedlaender and me, spent at the home of the father of the present dean, who was then Dean of the College. That was about fourteen years ago. The older Dean Russel then said that it is only just that T.C. should help the Jewish community solve its educational problem and not make it necessary for the Jewish community

to struggle unaided in its efforts.

This evening H. L. Simmons called. I mentioned to him the Kuttai matter. He did not react with great enthusiasm. In all my plowing with these people I have never yet encountered a piece of clear soil. It's all the time a matter of striking against some rock, pulling out the plow and putting it down again.

Anyhow he promised to get busy and bring in between 100 and 150 members in the next six weeks. He also promised to induce Harry Liebovitz to give up the chairmanship of the SAJ. That would be the saving of the organization.

* * * *

Monday, August 20, 1928

I spent the weekend with Lena at the Barons at West End. They certainly do their utmost to make my stay comfortable and pleasant. Although every time I spend a weekend of that kind I find myself mentally as alone as though I had been a castaway on some far off isle. I managed to suppress all signs of being any the worse for this spiritual solitude. I don't think I was altogether dull and boring company at table. Noticing how Vivian and her little daughter resemble each other I said, "And Vivian made Judith in her image."

In the course of a long walk I took with Lena yesterday I made her listen to me as I was thinking aloud on the meaning of Jewish ethics. I hit upon what appears to me to be a very interesting description of the different stages in Jewish ethical thinking. Everything went well till this morning when someone thoughtlessly passed a remark that upset my mental poise for the rest of the day. I am sure that person hadn't the least idea of the significance of that remark. But the very fact of not realizing the significance of that remark hurts me almost as much as it would have hurt me had the

person understood.

* * * *

Thursday, August 23, 1928

Forever and anon the question which all those whom I am teaching whether they be preparing themselves for social work, teaching in Hebrew schools or for the rabbinate keep on asking me, "Why should we refuse to be assimilated?" Ludwig Lewisohn's answer, "The Gentiles don't permit us to be assimilated," does not convince them. My answer, "Develop the potentialities of the Jewish national being, and you will see why," seems too much of a gamble.

What can we expect of these callow youths when a veteran Jew like the author of the anonymous article in the He Atid Vol. V., a man who is evidently steeped in the knowledge of Judaism, sees nothing but national suicide as the solution of the Jewish problem? That article is the most/^{heart}~~heart~~ rending dirge on the fate of the Jew that I have ever come across.

The futility of my efforts with the laity was brought home to me the other day when Simmons told me of his having talked with Charles Cohen about taking a hand in the organization of the SAJ chapter. Charles Cohen has been a trustee of the SAJ for the last five or six years. Seldom did a discussion of the work of the SAJ arise but what he would always make the statement that he does not know what the SAJ stands for. During the last year or two, however, I was under the impression that he at least had begun to understand the purpose of the SAJ. I recall how after a sermon that I delivered last winter in answer to Dr. Melamed's criticism of the SAJ, in his Reflex, Charles Cohen remarked "This is the clearest explanation of what the SAJ stands for that I have ever heard." Now that Simmons approached him about taking an active part in the organization of the SAJ chapter, Cohen replied "I could give you various excuses for not undertaking the work, but none of them would be the true

reasons for my refusal. The fact is that to this day I am not convinced of the value of the SAJ because I still do not know what it is aiming to accomplish."

* * *

Tuesday, August 28, 1928

Last Friday Dr. Benderly and I went to see Warburg at his office, 52 William Street, to get his advice with reference to the memorandum which I want to send to Dean Russel. He received us very graciously and put us at our ease. However, one may regret that he has no intrinsic concern in the inner problem of Jewish life and that his god is efficient management of educational and philanthropic institutions, he must be given credit for giving so much time to public institutions and for being so nice about it.

Another load off my head is the completion of the introduction to the translation of the Mesilat Yesharim.

* * *

Thursday, August 30, 1928

I am enjoying as usual my work with the class in the Training School for Jewish Social Work. I imagine that the students experience a feeling similar to that of beginning to learn a new language. Not having known anything to begin with the amount learned is perceptible and the sense of power gained is appreciable. As a consequence of their having practically no idea of Judaism, or what is worse, a very much ~~stuck~~ distorted notion of it, when they first come to me I can notice from lesson to lesson how they grow in their understanding of Judaism.

This morning I explained to the class the typical fallacy of the child mind and of the minds of the ancients -- who with a few exceptions racially speaking were children -- that of hypostatizing

abstract phases of reality, cosmic or social. I showed how this fallacy gave rise to the anthropomorphic conception of God and to the literalistic conception of the Messiah. I usually begin by an analogy from any of the conceptions of truth, justice, liberty which have been personified and represented by means of symbolic figures. Suppose we were to argue that because there are no such personified realities as these symbolic imply, would we have a right to assert that truth, justice, etc. do not represent any real forces in social life, forces that determine action? Yet this is exactly what all who deny the existence of God do when they become aware of the absurdity of the anthropomorphic representations of Him; they deny the existence of any reality whatever which might have given rise to the erroneous conception of God. In my opinion this is a more fruitful way of dealing with the problem of religion than is suggested by Santayana's definition of religion as poetry, which takes itself as science.

When the hour was over some of the students expressed satisfaction in having their ideas clarified. One man said "You have given me back the belief in God."

* * * *

Friday, August 31, 1928

While working on the introduction to the "Mesilat" I hit upon a most illuminating thought with regard to the difference between the ideology of rabbinic Judaism and that of medieval Judaism as formulated by the Jewish theologians and ethicists. In rabbinic Judaism the highest goal is the attainment of a share in the world to come; in medieval Judaism it is the acquisition of ^{physical} ~~supernatural~~ power enabling man to transcend his ~~physical~~ limitations. Whereas rabbinic Judaism was content with an advantage of a passive nature, medieval Judaism would have nothing less than an advantage of an active and

aggressive character. Each was of course the child of its age. In the days of rabbinic Judaism mankind merely sought an escape from the evils of this world. In the middle ages mankind began to experience the urge to transform the environment. It was not long before the dawn of science or to change the metaphor, creative intelligence, was beginning to feel its wings. Authority begrudging creative intelligence its independence proposed to transform the environment. It revived the ancient spirit of magic. This is why Kaballah and all kindred mysticisms took possession of the religious mind of those days.

The more I think on this subject the more I realize that traditional religion is fighting for the right of ancient magic to dominate human life. Its ~~deadliest~~ ^{deadliest} ~~science~~ ^{science} foe is ~~science~~ because whatever science may fail to achieve it certainly undermines all forms of magic.

Nowadays it is fashionable to designate magic as mysticism. There is no doubt a form of mysticism which is as legitimate and intelligible as the plainest nationalism, the mysticism which is based upon the sense of totality. But that is as unlike magic as an oyster pearl is unlike a synthetic one.

* * *

Saturday, September 1, 1928

The agony of being forever torn by doubt and inner conflict whenever I am confronted by the ~~deadening~~ apathy of the Jews toward the perpetuation of Jewish life is as much of a torment as the physical pain I endure when my ~~gonorrhea~~ ^{gonorrhea} get out of order. If I were absolutely convinced that even a regenerated Judaism, a Judaism freed of all its theurgy and eschatology and completely humanized, has no place in American life I would not be such a cynic or hypocrite as to go on teaching and preaching Judaism and trying to create a future for it. The fact is that I am thoroughly convinced that such a

Judaism would exalt the status of the Jew both in his own eyes and in the eyes of the world, and contribute to the enrichment of American spiritual values. But unless there be found some laymen of means and of aggressive personality to help me demonstrate the truth of this conviction all my efforts are futile. No spiritual or religious reformer ever succeeded without some powerful layman to sponsor his cause.

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Monday, September 4, 1928

The news item that the Fox Corporation is planning to put up six new theatres in Philadelphia at an expense of \$50,000,000, and that the first one is going to cost \$16,000,000 set me thinking about the grudging attitude taken by most people toward buildings for religious purposes. The money spent on cathedrals and temples is a bagatelle ^{compared} ~~compared~~ to the millions spent on movie picture places. The movies do not have to be fostered by voluntary organizations, gotten together and maintained by stupendous efforts. Being in demand they are the object of highly successful enterprise. It would be idle to affirm that they are useless or vicious. While it is true that incidentally that are both, in the main they exercise a healthful influence. Without the recreation they afford and the surrogate for suppressed desires the masses would get insane or commit the worst crimes. At times they even drive home some moral truths more effectively than the finest sermons. All in all it is evident that as worship is losing ground the movies are gaining.

In the minds of most people the deterioration of worship is synonymous with the deterioration of religion. While I have always felt that this was an erroneous view, I have never been able to see so clearly how little religion as such need be bound up with the institutional forms of it as I have been since I learned recently the

true character of traditional religion. Traditional religion is ecclesiastical religion. It represents the vested interests of those who, finding themselves unable to compete in the open market with those who possess the ingenuity and ability to procure the satisfaction of man's needs through the manipulation of natural forces, fall back upon supernatural claims and authority to bolster up what they offer as a means of satisfying human needs. In glancing through once again the Sifre Mussar I became convinced that this passionate love of God which the authors always hold up as man's highest happiness is not as disinterested as it looks. There always lurks -- and in the case of the ^Abbalistic writings it is frankly acknowledged -- the desire to use God. From that standpoint the scientist acts more decently than the religionist, and more reverently. If it is a matter of using, why not use gravitation and heat and electricity? God should be appreciated aesthetically as the landscape is. Humanizing religion means removing it from the control of ecclesiastics and putting it in charge of the artists who work as individuals and influence the human mind through the individual instead of the mass appeal. When artists will take over worship they will try to make it impressive by reason of its intrinsic beauty and worthwhileness. ~~But~~ They will not rely upon the ~~hokum~~ hokum and sanctimoniousness of mouldy formulas. Artists will create forms of worship as they create dramas and symphonies. The Jews ought to be pioneers in ~~the~~ working out this conception of worship.

* * *

Thursday, September 6, 1928

This afternoon the Teachers Institute faculty met. For the first time in my career I conducted the entire meeting in Hebrew. I hope that I shall be able to carry out my resolve to speak at the opening sessions next Thursday night in Hebrew without having my

talk written out beforehand. This will give me courage to carry out the promise I made at the meeting that I would henceforth conduct my courses in Hebrew.

* * * *

Sunday, September 9, 1928

I was by no means exhilarated by the experience of meeting the Seminary students for the purpose of helping them with their holiday sermons. Their lack of personality, idealism and creative ability makes me despair of a Jewish future in this country. How can we expect a young person of ordinary intelligence to have respect for Judaism when he sees such weaklings as are afraid of their shadow holding the position of spiritual leadership? The only ones who displayed a proper attitude in the discussions were Ira Eisenstein and a newly admitted student by the name of Theodore Friedman. The others were contented to catch as much as possible of my sermons that I had ~~read~~ them read. Not a word of their own did they have to contribute. The only questions they asked were of the following type: How can we say the same thing without alluding to what people no longer believe? (Kartzinel) Wherein is what you say about the sovereignty of God specifically Jewish? (Zeitlin)

Eisenstein wanted to know to what extent was the preacher to try to improve the ritual so as to conform with his own beliefs and also whether it was proper for the preacher to deal with the strike problem in case he happened to be in a town like New Bedford. I replied that while a permanent preacher was in duty bound to deal with all such questions they did not fall within the province of a man who came merely for the holidays. Not knowing enough about the situation and the people involved he was liable to defeat his own purpose. I was told, however, that many of these temporary preachers are being asked to read the service. In that case I said that it

improper for any one to act as "Sh'liah Zifltur" in such prayers as he could not conscientiously subscribe to. "Why," asked R. Leon Hurwitz, "may not one do what he is asked ~~to~~ without necessarily believing in it himself?" I almost fell over when I heard this kind of question from him for the hundreth time. No matter what I have said and argued and pleaded in all the years that he was a student and ever since is as though it had been written in water.

Last night I worked over ~~two~~ two hours to arrange a program of Selihot services that would infuse some meaning into them. I selected from the liturgy for the occasion only the most significant passages, and read the English translation aloud before the cantor chanted the Hebrew. I also added a reading from Zung's "Leiden" in the English translation, besides a prayer from Fosdick's little book on The Meaning of Faith. The entire service lasted an hour which passed almost unnoticed. People who have some capacity for appreciation would have greeted such a service with joy. But the twenty or twenty-five people who were there not even most of the Seminary students who were there, reacted with any enthusiasm. Lena too missed the "hypnotism" as she termed it. She thought ^{that} ~~that~~ making the service intelligible was the reason it lacked warmth. She may be right but if she is right then I have been on the wrong track all these years. It is certain that I am working with the wrongest kind of people in the world. But how am I ever to get at the worthwhile kind?

These are the days when I am forming momentous decisions by my very indecision. How I would love to be able to come before the Board of Trustees tomorrow night and say to them, "Gentlemen, you have not given me the cooperation necessary to put the SAJ movement on the map. I have to quit." Whenever I am depressed these days I comfort

myself with the thought that I am at last to be free and live my own life without worrying what is to become of Judaism. But then I realize how integrated my work at the SAJ is with all the rest of my work. I would be deprived of the backing without which I would scarcely venture to assert myself and speak my mind freely. I would also not have the mechanical help of secretarial service. So I yield to the inevitable and decide to remain in harness. Such are the conflicting sentiments that agitate me from early morning till I fall asleep.

Last week Charles Cowen informed me of the effort that is being made by the Zionist organization to organize regional units. The New York region was to organize itself this Sunday. He wants me to deliver an address on the cultural work which the Z.O. ought to launch. Also a dinner was to be given tonight to Lipsky on the occasion of his arrival from Europe. Cowen asked me to write a letter in case I was unable to come.

Although I should have yielded to my better judgment and have said no, I proved too weak to do so. I wrote the letter - which Cowen told me was an excellent one - and I delivered the address. There were about two hundred ^{people} ~~men~~ present. This took place at the Level Club, 253 W. 73 St. I was not satisfied with the address, but those who heard it thought rather well of it. One man came to me after the address and told me that he had spoken with a number of my disciples for the purpose of finding out from them what they meant by religion. This was apropos of the statement I made that it was the duty of the Zionist Organization to foster an interest in religion. If it is not of the Mizrahi type then let it be of the Maaravi type.

Monday, September 10, 1928

Two interesting ideas have come to me lately, one discussing Maimonides with the class of the Training School, the other while working on the sermon for Rosh Hashanah.

1. The fact that Maimonides points out that the order of the world which proves God is not the order visible in physical laws of nature but in mathematical and logical laws of reason, and moreover that even God cannot change the mathematical and logical laws of reason, enables me to understand the main point in Spinoza's philosophy. I see now that in the same way as Maimonides identifies the functioning of God with the mathematical and logical laws of reason so Spinoza goes one step further and identifies God with the physical laws of nature.

Lately there also dawned on me the true significance of Spinoza's philosophy in relation to religion as a whole. When I read again some of the Jewish ethical texts of the middle ages I became convinced that the protagonists of religion consciously and fervently uphold the theurgic and anti-naturalistic conception of the world. While I realized in a general way that the reason the Jewish philosophers take such pains to emphasize the doctrine of creatio ex nihilo is that only such doctrine is compatible with the possibility of miracles, the full force of their insistence upon that doctrine did not strike me until recently. As I see it now the belief in creatio ex nihilo is basic to the conception of a theurgic God, the God of all ancient and traditional religions. No wonder the medieval Jewish philosophers spent themselves defending that belief.

This of course brings into bold relief Spinoza's contribution to the development of religion. In the negation of a theurgic God he was not setting up anything new. All of Greek philosophy had practically achieved that. What Spinoza really did was to shatter once and for all the pretentious claims of the philosophers of the

himself to one particular philosophic conception of God. Much depends on one's mood and state of mental development. But so long as a Jew will not rest content unless some experienced fact or process stands out in his mind as so all significant that it is identified with God, and becomes an incentive to his giving of the best that is in him, and to his enduring the worst that may befall him, he is fulfilling the sine qua non of Jewish life.

As I was walking around the reservoir yesterday I met a man by the name Werner who is a trustee of the YMHA. We hadn't seen each other for the last six or seven years, which is practically since I resigned from the Board of Directors when I disapproved of the kind of religious work they were doing in their institution. The two questions which he asked me indicate to what extent a man of that type who as a YMHA trustee should have some idea of Jewish life is in touch with things Jewish. He asked me whether I was still connected with the Jewish Center and whether I was still teaching at Columbia. He was apparently disappointed when I told him that I was teaching at the Seminary. He didn't seem to know of the existence of such an institution.

Coming across a reference to the p. 67 in the story by Feirberg, it occurred to me that some one ought to do for Kaballah - especially the magic of it - what Frazer did for the religions of the primitive peoples in Australia, etc.

* * *

Wednesday, September 12, 1928

The meeting of the SAJ Board of Trustees which took place last Monday night was the one ~~at~~ at which I had intended to hand in my resignation. Every time during the last few weeks that I felt down at the mouth I comforted myself with the thought that when this meeting would

be over I would find myself a free man. Strange to say - or perhaps, in all naturalness - the meeting passed off with the utmost calm. There was scarcely a quorum present. Yet somehow I felt serene as though I had made peace with all the disturbing elements and forces in my little world. I felt adjusted. With ^{Henry} Rosenthal to help me with the ^{S.A.J.} Review and with my own work, I saw no reason for being worried about the apathy of the members. So long as they will in the end pay the bills, why should I not go on doing all I can do in my own way to advance the cause of Judaism. All I had to do was to call out Abe Liebovitz, the treasurer, from the meeting and tell him that he should transfer to Rosenthal the \$15.00 weekly payment that had been assigned me for secretarial assistance and that \$25 weekly should be paid Rosenthal from the SAJ Review fund, and Liebovitz assented without the least demur. What is more, when I said that I would pay Rosenthal \$10 per week from my own pocket, he added that I shouldn't think of doing that. Could I want anything better? Besides, I am beginning to feel that the less I shall work myself into a tantrum about the present membership of the SAJ and the more I will avail myself of the opportunity to write and publish the more I will accomplish and feel contented.

I do not think that I have so far said anything in this diary about Henry M. Rosenthal. If that is the case it is a serious omission because he is one of the very few extraordinary men that have walked into my life. When I first met him as a student about three years ago, he was a thin, somewhat ungainly youth, medium sized then, sallow complexion with a small and irregular-featured face. His heavy lidded eyes were shielded by glasses and only when in his nasal voice he shot out some brilliant epigram did those ^{eyes} light up for a moment signal-like. The course which I was then giving at the Seminary dealt with the re-interpretation of the three main attributes of God as helper, as

sovereign and as redeemer. He and Milton Steinberg continually belabored me with questions. His especially were like rapier thrusts. Time and again he challenged my attempt to stamp modernist concepts with an ancient terminology. In the end both he and Steinberg seemed to be convinced. So impressed was I then with his literary talent that I discussed with him the feasibility of employing him as a collaborator on a book to be based on the lectures that I was then giving. (I even suggested having his name appear as co-author.) The difficulty was to get the funds. He would have to be paid for his part of the work.

I remember how a remark of his made in the course of the conversation I had with him concerning this plan hurt me. I happened to say something about the need of embellishing the style of the material that I had been giving in the class, when he blurted it that the style was rather crude. It may be that the fear that he might claim too much credit for any work on which we would collaborate deterred me from going on with the negotiations. Whatever the case may have been then by now I have grown somewhat more confident myself and less petty about acknowledging the help received from others. I had him help me with the editorial of the SAJ Review ever since it has appeared in print. I give him the substance and he writes it out in proper form. It is only occasionally that he fails to catch the proper slant of what I tell him. He told me that it takes him variously from three to five hours to write out the editorials. He is paid by the SAJ at the rate of \$2000 per annum. Without such assistance as I get from him I could never have gone on with the Review.

I also had him revise my translation of the "Mesillat." He spent on it forty hours for which I paid him eighty dollars.

About a year and a half ago having been told by Steinberg that Rosenthal had become so disgusted with the Seminary that he was on the point of giving up the idea of studying for the rabbinate, I

invited Rosenthal for a long chat with the view of persuading him to stick. I believe it was immediately after examination period. He seemed to have crammed himself full of Talmudic lore which was too gritty for his honest intellectual stomach, and to have been overcome with a ~~xxx~~ nauseous and retching sensation. From what happened subsequently I also infer that he was at the time also in love with Rachel Tschernowitz whom he married this summer a year ago. Whether my words had any effect on him I have no way of knowing; but the fact is that he is still at the Seminary.

He met Miss Tsch. at the Hebrew School in Flushing where they both taught daily and he fell madly in love with her. He married her apparently without going into the kind of careful calculations as to the responsibilities involved in supporting a family. Never any too cheerful by temperament, he must have passed through some excruciating states of depression last year as he realized his limited earning capacity. I cannot say how well he will manage to get along with the \$2000 he will get from the SAJ. It looks as though a baby is on the way.

What started me off on this rather lengthy account of him is a story which he finished at the beginning of the summer and which he gave me to read. It is entitled "With a Cigarette behind a Door." He offered this story to the Menorah Journal but they have been hesitating about accepting it. They said that while it has intrinsic merit they were afraid it would be incomprehensible to the readers. Being curious to know what kind of writing it could be that the Menorah would refuse to accept anything of Rosenthal's, I read through the story immediately after he handed it to me. I found it to be a very remarkable account of his inner struggles not only with the God idea but with God. From the story and from the discussion which I had with him afterwards I became aware that Rosenthal was not only a man of unusual literary

gifts but of extraordinary spiritual insight and courage. One statement that he made to me has a bearing on the article and on his general attitude toward religion. He said that it was blasphemy to believe that it was possible to blaspheme God. This is a mystic observation worthy of the greatest Kabbalists. (I am thinking, of course, of philosophic kabbalists and not of the Jewish magicians.)

Before the day is over I shall have to come to a decision of momentous consequences. Yesterday at four o'clock Lipsky, Rottenberg and ^{Charles} Cowen of the Zionist Organization called on me. Never could I have suspected the purpose of their visit. It was nothing less than to ask me to accept the chairmanship of the Administrative Committee of the Zionist Organization. According to the revision made in the constitution at the last convention, Lipsky, the president of the organization can not act as chairman of the Administrative committee. They said that at the present juncture when the Jewish Agency is about to be formed it is essential that the ZOA shall carry sufficient weight and prestige to save it from disintegrating. They tried to impress upon me that I would be rendering the organization a tremendous service by accepting the chairmanship. In their opinion I represented a phase of Jewish life, the cultural-religious, which has no outstanding representative in the administration. Stephen Wise, Lipsky said, is more of a political than a religious factor. Moreover, the Marshall group would find it difficult to negotiate with the organization, with him as chairman of the administration committee.

This is a genuine dilemma I am in. To accept is to diminish the chances of my doing any writing and publishing; to refuse is to let go a rare opportunity to be of service and influence.

The architect of the T.I. plans asked me to take a look at them once more before they are to go ^{to} the engineer. I saw them this afternoon and found that everything I had suggested had been provided for. Louis Kraft of the Welfare Board helped me a great deal with his advice.

From the architect's office which is at 101 Park Ave., I walked home and used the time to weigh the ~~for~~ pros and cons of my accepting the chairmanship of the ZO Administrative Board. The pros won and a little before six I called up Lipsky and told him that I would consent to serve. He and Cowen and a few more who had been waiting for my reply expressed profound satisfaction.

This evening I was ~~pro~~ formally elected by the Board and at the request of Cowen I came to the meeting which was being held at the Olcott, 27 W. 72 St. The meeting was being conducted by Lipsky. I made my little speech and then listened to the discussion which was of a very high order and dealt with some very important matters. Already I feel that I can be of ^{service.} ~~service.~~ The U.P.A. ^{drive} ~~drive~~ is about to be organized and the Hadassah is making trouble. "I must get those women into line."

* * *

Friday, September 14, 1928, 5:00 P.M.

The opening of the T.I. was scheduled for last night. I had made up my mind to speak extemporaneously in Hebrew no matter whether I acquit myself creditably or not. Despite all the ^{interruptions} ~~disturbances~~ that I have had this week I went primed to speak in Hebrew. When, however, I saw the small number of students - there were about sixty present - that came for the opening exercises, I was going to postpone the opening exercises for a later date. I had never postponed these exercises. Two factors contributed to the attendance being poor. First, the fact that no new freshman class had been admitted; and the second,

the proximity of Rosh Hashanah eve. The instructors, especially ^{Morris} Levine advised against postponement and suggested that the program be carried out in less elaborate fashion than usually. I acted on the suggestion and gave only part of the talk that I had intended to give. In order to counteract the frigid atmosphere that prevailed at the assembly I resorted to the matter of breaking up my remarks by questions. It worked quite well, and while I cannot say that I at last scored a victory against the element of fear of speaking in Hebrew publicly lest I make mistakes or be at a loss for a word, I succeeded well enough to want to try again.

During the hour or two that I stayed at the meeting of the Administrative committee of the ZOA last Wednesday night I saw that I must not permit the Committee to conduct its negotiations with the Hadassah on the basis of resolutions. I suggested that a sub-committee meet the Hadassah Committee to remove the difficulty which stands in the way of their conduct^{ing} the coming campaign jointly. Yesterday I telephoned on my own responsibility to Mrs. Zip Szold who is acting chairman of the organization to see me. She came today and I had quite a lengthy talk with her. She was of course surprised at my accepting the chairmanship after what had happened at the convention. I explained that it is my policy to work with such forces as we have and under conditions as they exist, and pleaded with her that she help me establish cooperation between the Z.O. and Hadassah. I gradually put before her the proposition about the terms upon which the Administrative Committee said they would go in with the Hadassah into the UPA drive. She certainly did not rebuff me, as I had been led to believe she would and was amenable to reason.

I asked her to help me improve matters at the Z.O. by indicating to me specifically the bad spots in the organization. This part of the conversation was to remain confidential. She mentioned Weisgal and Blitz as influences for evil. I agree with her as to the first. The second man I do not know at all.

* * * *

Monday, September 17, 1928

As I watched the congregation of the SAJ on Saturday the first day of Rosh Hashonah and yesterday I realized what led me to accept the chairmanship of the Administrative Committee of the ZOA. The high holidays falling somewhat early this year was the cause of one third of the membership body remaining out of town. With the few ^{occasions} ~~opportunities~~ that Jews have the opportunity to act together as Jews, one would imagine that they would manifest sufficient loyalty to the synagogue to put themselves out a little bit in order to insure its playing a part during the most important days of the Jewish calendar. And especially of those who are associated under the name SAJ one might expect some greater degree of interest in making the High Holidays red letter days in their life as Jews. Yet in my own family there were eleven people who stayed in West End, N.J. and were satisfied to put up with a dry, meaningless service in a temporary synagogue.

Most of those who came marched in about eleven o'clock. They no sooner sat down than they began looking around to observe the kind of clothes their neighbors wore and whenever they would get a chance they would engage in conversation about their personal trivialities. Those who come rarely to the synagogue act on these days as though they were Jewish travelers visiting a church. They feel embarrassed and self-conscious, not knowing how to handle the Mahzor and being ill at ease with the tallis.

All this naturally contributes to my sense of frustration in trying to awaken Jewish feeling and promote Jewish habits in our people. That sense of frustration it is that has driven me into the arms of the ZO. There I imagine there are some people who are at least active and who display feeling, although I suppose a good deal of the activity and the feeling, ~~although I suppose a good deal of the activity and the feeling~~ is of the wrong kind.

I intended to have the sermons deal with the program of the SAJ. The first day's sermon was to be devoted to the God-idea or ~~the~~ religious reconstruction in Judaism; the second to the reconstruction of Jewish social life; and on Yom Kippur I expected to speak of the cultural reconstruction. I had to spend, however, so much time the first day of R.H. on introducing the subject that I had to leave the body of the sermon for the day following (which was yesterday). When the time for giving the sermon arrived I was not sufficiently stimulated by the audience to take up the discussion of the God-idea. Dr. Krass's presence may have added to the reasons for my not preaching what I had originally intended. Not having any services on the second day of ~~the~~ holidays he often comes to our service on those days. In my sermon on the reconstruction of religion I give expression to the idea recorded on p. 64. Suspecting that he might spread false rumors about me as a result of what he might hear I thought it best to postpone the sermon. That, however was only a minor reason. The main reason was my apprehension that the people were not in a mood to listen to a sermon on What God Should Mean to Us.

This morning Mrs. Jacobs called in response to my request. She was until recently one of the most active members of the National Board of the Hadassah. Not knowing that she had resigned I asked her to come to see me. I thought that she might help me in my efforts to

bring about peace between the Hadassah and the ZOA. Although she is no longer on the Board she still works in an unofficial capacity for the Hadassah and her influence might go far with those on the Board.

She too was amazed at my accepting the chairmanship. The Pittsburgh convention left her disillusioned and embittered against the personnel of the ZOA. The tears came to her eyes every time she referred to the shattering effect which the convention had on her after having given her best years and energy to the movement.

She believed, however, that peace and cooperation between the two organizations was by no means impossible.

This afternoon I went to the ZOA offices for the purpose of talking matters over with Rubinow. I had been at the present offices only once before. That was last spring when the peace committee met with the Administrative Committee to find some way of bringing them together with the Opposition Group. When I came I was shown to the office where Rubinow was supposed to be. No one seemed to know whether he had left or whether he was in the building. That was his first day in office.

In the meantime I met Maurice Samuel⁴. He told me he went into business with his brother. When I gave no sign of being shocked he ^{said} says I was the first person who took the news of his going into business with equanimity. Not knowing what to say I merely asked what kind of business he was going into. He replied that it was making different kinds of tooth pastes and mouth washes. I really should have been shocked. He is too talented a man to be wasted. Still I think that he has fared better than many others of his type. There is no reason why he should not have gone into the ministry. He probably would have had to suppress himself considerably, but there would have remained enough of native talent to have enabled him to make some permanent contribution to Jewish life.

Rubinow did not show up. So I asked Chas. Cowen whom I met there to walk with me part of the way home. We discussed the question of bringing about an entente cordiale between the ZO and Hadassah. He pointed out two important facts: 1. That the "adassah was not scrupulous in having among its leading members women who are not interested in Zionism. 2. That the feud between the two organizations dates from the Brandeis controversy when Brandeis was endeavoring to confine work in Palestine to the economic upbuilding of the land and to exclude education and similar activities from the budget. ~~The~~ Hadassah then sided with Brandeis, and have therefore been as a thorn in the side of the ZO ever since.

Cowen was also of the opinion that I ought to proceed with my efforts to bring about a better understanding between the organizations.

Max Rubin told me about the following incidents which are typical of Jewish life. In the course of his travels with his family he would often find it necessary to resort to an expression in Yiddish to give emphasis to what he was saying. His daughters could not bear to hear him use Yiddish and reprimanded him for not finding an English equivalent.

On Erev Rosh Hashanah he was ~~was~~ conversing with a friend of his who was Jewish. With them there was also a Gentile. When the Jewish friend was taking leave he ~~xxx~~ whispered in Max's ear "A Happy New Year to you" for fear the Gentile might overhear.

An incident of a different character and one that is rather unique. A Gentile friend of Max's moved from the suburbs into the city. Speaking about his children he told Max that he was sending them to a Jewish school in the neighborhood. "What Jewish school?" asked Max. "Why, the Ethical Culture School," the Gentile replied. "Why do you send them to a Jewish school?" asked Max. "Because they will have

to mix with Jews when they grow up; let them therefore learn to mingle with Jewish children. Otherwise they would grow up with prejudices against the Jews," was the Gentile's reply.

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Tuesday, September 18, 1928

After two hours instruction at the Training School I went to Underwood and Underwood to have my picture taken. I understand that they have a sort of "rogues gallery" and the picture won't cost me anything.

This afternoon I attended a faculty meeting which lasted from 3:00 to 7:00. A good deal of time is spent awarding scholarships. I tried to point out that there ought to be some definite policy in making the awards. The policy which I would favor would be that of helping the weaker men to give their entire time or most of it to the studies at the Seminary. With the method that is now followed the better men will be given a chance to devote themselves entirely to study -- which is excellent - but the weaker men will grow even worse than they might otherwise be. This wide rift between the two types of men will create a difficult problem for the Seminary. Personally I would prefer to see all concerning whose ability there is any question excluded from the Seminary.

Tonight I went to see the rehearsal of the play 'Jephtha' to be given by the special group of youngsters who are being trained by the Kutais. H.L. Simmons whom I had asked to come to the rehearsal came with his son in time to see only one scene presented. I was very much impressed by the presentation and so was Simmons. My object in inviting him was to show him the object for which I would like the SAJ chapter to contribute \$5000 this year.

Walking home with Simmons I learned from him a most unexpected piece of news. He has been repeatedly approached by some of the most influential members of the Jewish Center to bring about an amalgamation of the SAJ congregation with the Jewish Center. S. C. Lamport who belongs to both institutions, Sadowsky who is one of the main supporters of the Center, Bernard K. Marcus who is on the Board of the Center - all of them are anxious to bring about a merger of the two organizations. The only terms upon which Simmons would even consider the possibility of a merger would be the elimination of Jung from the rabbinate and the appointment in his place of a man of my choosing, secondly, the backing of the SAJ movement in its wider scope.

Simmons is very anxious to emancipate me from having to do with the congregational aspect of the movement and to enable me so to represent the SAJ movement that its true character as a means of emphasizing the organic and comprehensive character of Jewish life as a whole shall not be missed. He may not be able to put this in so many words but he has the right intuition about what I ought to do; I shall, therefore, allow myself to be guided by his advice. This is why I told him that I gave him carte blanche in carrying on the negotiations with those who ~~previously~~ favored amalgamation.

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Wednesday, September 19, 1928

I went this morning during rainstorm to ZO office. I had a talk with Lipsky on the importance of reestablishing cordial relations between ZO and Hadassah, and organizing an economic council to deal with problems of investments, credits and of encouraging buying Palestine products. Afterwards I had a brief talk with Rubinow. He showed me Lipsky's editorials in the Sept. 7-14 issue of The New Palestine, and indicated to me how ill-advised they were. He said that with him and me cooperating we are likely to bring some order into the chaos since they could

ill afford having us step out together after our appointment was hailed with such glee. Rubinow said that an editorial board will have to be appointed to prevent the ZO publications from being used to keep hostility alive.

This afternoon Maurice Samuel~~l~~ called. I had a very pleasant chat with him which led to the suggestion that the article which he is to write for the Review should deal with the value of pilgrimages to Palestine. I touched upon the question of the Hadassah. What else could he say but agree on the vital need of having the women work with the ZO?

This evening S. C. Lamport gave a dinner to Consul Heiser who represented this country at Jerusalem during the last five years. I had not intended to attend, but somehow I felt that it was my duty to show myself at least. The dinner took place at the Club 56 W. 40 St. There were about fifty people present. On the way there I thought I better prepare to say something in case I am called up. Sure enough I was, and what I said wasn't so bad.

From there I rushed to the UPA meeting that was being held by representatives of the various Zionist bodies to consider primarily the question as to the terms on which Hadassah was to join the campaign. The meeting went on at the Olcott Hotel, 27 W. 72 St. When I came I found Elihu D. Stone speaking. He wouldn't think of granting the Hadassah any concessions. The debate centered upon the question whether or not to grant the Hadassah a priority claim on the funds. I maintained that this year being an emergency year by reason of the accumulated ill feeling that had to be overcome they should be granted the priority right. Lipsky opposed me. I was getting excited but kept myself under control. When Rothenberg said that the National Fund and

the Mizrachi's would not participate in the UPA if Hadassah was granted priority, I protested warmly against the right of any group to hold a club over the rest of the UPA. At first ^{Mr} Rothenberg almost refuted me. I did not know what to reply. But by the time the next speaker was through I got back my mental wind and scored a point on Rothenberg, by pointing out the fact that I did not concede the right to any constituent group of the UPA to hold a club over the rest any more than I conceded that right to any other of the constituent groups.

* * *

Friday September 20, 1928

Last night Sidney Matz came to ask me how it was that I accepted the chairmanship ~~for~~ of the Administrative Committee after the Organization had dealt so uncereemoniously with the program of the Peace Committee at the Pittsburgh Convention. He had been asked by Liebovitz to go on the finance committee and he evidently wanted me to supply him with some of the elixir of forgetfulness by which I doped myself in order to forget the terrible experience we went through before and during the Convention. I gave him a good dose of it and he is now all for the future with the past "spurlos versenkt."

Matz brought with him Prof. Wolfsohn of Harvard. The first time I caught a glimpse of him about thirteen years ago was when I delivered a lecture before the Menorah Group at Harvard. He then ~~appeared~~ appeared very shy and unimpressive. But having heard since so much about his wonderful influence on some of the Jewish students at Harvard, and having read some of his writings I had imagined that he must acquired in the meantime dignified presence. I was disillusioned, however, when I saw him again for the second time last night.

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Sunday, September 23, 1928

Wolfsohn remained for a while after Matz left. We discussed the question of what would be an ideal service. Some time ago he tried to establish a rational type of service for the Jewish students in Harvard. Those who attended came either from Orthodox or from Reform homes. The service accordingly appealed to neither element. As far as he himself is concerned, he told me, some time ago he went into an Orthodox shul on the first day of Rosh Hashanah, and was so disgusted that he has not gone into a synagogue since.

He expressed himself favorably with regard to the parochial schools and yeshivahs. They were the only guarantees of the traditional Jewish learning being kept up. His early Yeshivah training and probably also a sentimental temperament are responsible for his taking that attitude.

Personally I have of late evolved a new ^{theory} ~~theory~~ with regard to the place of Orthodoxy in the scheme of Jewish adjustment ~~as~~ I have formulated in my mind. My theory is as follows: When Judaism came into contact with modern life and thought, the Reformists were the first Jews to achieve a new Jewish synthesis. Being the first ^{down} they were bound to go ~~down~~ in defeat, not so much because of the inadequacy of their solution - though a good deal was due to ^{that} ~~that~~ - but because in all social readjustments the first generations must be expected to lose out. It is like taking a fortress. The shock troops are thinned out, and victory depends upon the ability to supply reserves. In case of Jewish life, the reserves following upon the Reformists ranks are the Jewish nationalists. But even the nationalists despite their more adequate character of their solution will for the most part give way to assimilation. They too belong to the shock troops. Fortunately we can count on a reserve that will finally come to grips with the assimilationist forces and win. They are at

present the Orthodox ranks who in a generation from now will adopt the nationalist solution and live by it as Jews.

In the extemporaneous sermon which I preached yesterday morning I interpreted the Haazinu Song, as expressive of the urge to discover some reasonable ground on which to base the hope that Israel will survive. The ancient poet believed that he discovered such a basis in the fact that the honor of Israel's God was at stake. At the present time too we crave for a reasonable basis for a belief in Israel's ability to survive the present crisis. The fact that the Jewish people is committed to the task of demonstrating the validity and supremacy of the spiritual is our guarantee, provided of course, we have intuitive faith in the ability of the spiritual to function as an efficient cause in human life.

I invited Judith Epstein and her husband yesterday afternoon to the house for the purpose of discussing with them the establishment of harmonious relationships between the ZOA and Hadassah.

Saw last night a play called "Machinal" by Sophie Treadwell at the Plymouth Theatre. Dramatically it was a concoction of the American Tragedy. The adding machine O'Neil's method of asides, the Snyder case and a story how an American ^{killed} ~~murdered~~ two Mexican captors with a bottle which they had emptied of whiskey. There is no limit nowadays in the liberties they take on the stage. From license in bawdy talk it is getting to license in bawdy action. What was most depressing was not only the obsession with sex but the representation of adultery as an act of purification. It seems we are fast moving into a type of thought in which the suppressed instincts will avenge themselves on the ancient and medieval denunciation of the flesh by declaring that only the flesh is holy. It seems to me that the "Front Page" by Ben Hecht was a nursery play composed to this thing I saw last night.

This afternoon I 'phoned to Lipsky to come over for a chat about Zionist matters. We took a walk between 2:30 and 3:30 in the park. The following topics were touched on in our conversation.

1. Sacher's visit to this country. His first task will be to inform Marshall of the binding character of the two main resolutions passed at the Actions Committee with regard to maintaining the integrity of the National Fund and permitting the settlers to determine their own economic policies. Both are very delicate questions which might give rise to ill feeling if not properly handled. The Commission recommended the organization of a land purchasing company which was to buy up land and sell to Jews for private holdings. In its opinion national ownership is economically unproductive especially as land so owned cannot be hypothecated for loans. The Kuvozot are a sore spot in the work of rehabilitation of Palestine. One of the Commissioners had described them in a printed report as nests of immortality. It was with great difficulty that this characterization was kept out of the final report.

2. I mentioned to Lipsky that he must help me in recommending the priority to Hadassah. He thought that he's got Haddasah licked. I pointed out to him that we must save Hadassah from itself, for if it is going to go out on a separate campaign and lose we would in the end be the losers. Seeing that he would not consent to recommend priority, I proposed the plan that had been casually suggested to me by young Epstein in the conversation yesterday, namely that a few men underwrite the amount to be given the Hadassah. On his agreeing to that I asked him to arrange a meeting for tomorrow night at Morrison's home. A. Liebovitz is to be asked too, and Jacob Cohen of the Administrative Committee, to be communicated with by phone from Morrison's home.

3. I discussed the functions of the various committees. The arrangement whereby he is to preside at the weekly meeting of the

Chairmen seems awkward.

4. I suggested the need of establishing an editorial committee to keep out partisan issues of a controversial character from the periodicals and literature published by the ZO.

* * *

Monday night, September 24, 1928

The services this Yom Kippur were most successful from the standpoint of the spirit of worship, I succeeded in creating through the various talks and explanations which I gave. There was less of a stampede for the doors after the Musaf Kedushah, there were more people in the early part of the service, and there was less conversation than usual. I have no way of telling whether the suggestion I made on the second day of Rosh Hashonah that those who found the long service boring could spend their time reading the Bible or some book on Jewish history or Jewish literature was acted upon to a considerable extent or not. Unfortunately I do not get the cooperation from Cantor Nathanson that he ought to give. He does not take the trouble to render any musical selection and those in which the congregation joins he does not always pitch properly or sing accurately. It is very seldom that he sings or recites a phrase with any real feeling. His entire attitude irritates me.

Lipsky called up tonight saying that he was not successful in arranging the meeting with Morrison and Liebovitz. He expects to meet Morrison together with Sacher tomorrow at luncheon. There he will propose to Morrison the plan of underwriting.

I called up Mrs. Zip. Szold to let her know that I can't be present at the Hadassah meeting tomorrow before 4:00. I also told her of Lipsky's efforts with Morrison and of my own endeavors to alter the existing attitude of the ZO to Hadassah. She was very much

pleased to hear all this. "Was not the attitude of the members of the organization who were present at the UPA Conference decidedly hostile to Hadassah?" she asked. I admitted that that was the case, but explained it as a hangover from the convention days. I promised to do everything in my power to destroy that attitude.

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Tuesday night, September 25, 1928

From eleven to four I spent today examining and interviewing students who applied for admission to the Seminary. Of the seventeen who took the test - which I have worked out as a means of forming some idea of their general intelligence and power of grasp - I found five to be unfit to enter the Seminary. Dr. Adler appointed me chairman of committee on admission of students. The other members of the Committee are Levine and Finkelstein. This was quite a new experience for me.

I excused myself from the greater part of the Faculty meeting in order to attend the meeting of the Hadassah National Board which took place at the home of Mrs. Rosensohn, 17 W. 76 St. Mr. Morris Mothenberg, Dr. Rubinow and I pleaded with the Board to have the Hadassah remain in the UPA campaign. I spoke very frankly and probably also very naively about the relations between the Hadassah and the ZOA. The women seemed to be impressed by Rubinow's determination as well as mine to give the Hadassah proper representation on the UPA board. Mrs. Rosensohn went so far as to question on general principles the advisability of having Hadassah tied up with the other Zionist organizations, such as the ZO Mizrahi, etc. but fortunately she admitted that this year a break with the UPA would have a harmful effect on the Hadassah. I replied that once they consent to act with us this year, we will be in a position to discuss the question of

permanent relationships dispassionately. They seemed to admit that I was right. I hope that our plea was not in vain.

I am unnerved again about the SAJ. The feeling I have about it may be described as nothing less than panicky. It is not appreciation I am looking for but encouragement which would be an evidence of an awakening interest in the program of Jewish life that I am striving with all my might to get the members to understand. But not a scintilla of such evidence. After preaching and teaching during the thirteen hours of the Yom Kippur services, and watching that every part of those services shall be rendered fittingly and be made as interesting as possible, the only one who had the decency to come up and greet me at the end of the long ordeal was Teddy Schneider. I do not know what sort of feelings those people have or if they have any that could get them to transcend their own immediate wants. What was it that led every man in the old time synagogue to greet warmly even the Baal Shoharim when he got through with his part of the service? And as for the Rabbi, he was showered with blessings and good wishes. I suppose at the bottom of it all was the sense of a need for what the Hazan or the Rabbi did for them. The people nowadays do not feel the need for what we of the religious guild offer them and offer them in such abundance. Why then should they be appreciative of it, or grow ecstatic about it? Of course I can see the matter from their point of view. I was almost going to swear at them for not having the courage to stay away from the synagogue altogether and pretending that they want religion, but then I reminded myself that they are only living on the momentum of the habits which were communicated to them by their parents; that they are continually pestered by people like myself, and that into their retaining even the loosest attachment to the synagogue there enter a thousand other motives than those which have to do with religion.

I threw all dignity to the winds and telephoned tonight to H.L. Simmons to find out what progress he was making with the organization of the SAJ Chapter (see p. 56). I knew he had not done a thing. But what is the use of waiting for him to call me up. Consequently I am resorting to the methods of the pullers-in. In the conversation which I had with him I had to promise to send him a list of SAJ members whom he would meet for the purpose of getting them to assume responsibility for the organization of the chapter. He will under no circumstances accept the chairmanship. He is still too preoccupied with his business to undertake any outside work. And as soon as he has any freedom he will devote some of his leisure time to Zionism. After all the thanks of a man like Weizmann is worth more than the thanks he would get from me.

In his talk with me over the phone he dissipated the mirage which he summoned up before me in the conversation he had with me a short time ago. I refer to his intimation that there was a possibility of the SAJ's merging with the Center, on terms favorable to the SAJ. That was all hot air emanating from the Lamport firm. S. C. Lamport, it seems, is yielding to the allurements of the Center crowd who are now playing upon his filial sympathies for his father who died recently. Wanting to get back entirely to the Center -- for he has never severed his connection with it -- he believes that he could escape being regarded as a turncoat by me and the few friends I have if he could get the entire SAJ back with the Center.

This whole matter has given me a kind of spiritual nausea.

And that other paragon of gentelmanliness and refinement, Joe Levy! Him too I called up tonight. I must have been in a specially masochisting frame of mind, just craving for self-torture to wish to engage in conversation with that melancholy miser. I got what I was looking for.

Wednesday, September 26, 1928

I am beginning to suspect that I am more of an esthetic^e than a moralist. My change of attitude toward the Zionist Organization may be justified on esthetic grounds. According to Leo Stein "a change of opinion does not prove the previous one to be wrong, for often one comes back to it later. Another self-groping seems to be involved." (The A-B-C of Aesthetics, p. 126.)

* * * *

Tuesday, October 2, 1928

Last Thursday night Louis Borgenicht called. He is a man nearing the sixties, father of a large family, and at one time a very prosperous manufacturer. He is a Hungarian, which means that the spirit of loyalty is the dominant trait in the life of his household. The father is a strict observer of the religious ceremonies and the children would not, out of regard for their father, think of being otherwise. The Hungarian Jews like those of Southern Germany seem to lack the sense of community but within the narrow range of the family or congregation they are intensely loyal. As a rule they are finer featured than the other European Jews. They lack the keenness of mind characteristic of the Lithuanian; they excel the latter in being masters of the grand style.

This Borgenich would probably have been one of my followers if his son had not married a daughter of the Gottesmans. The Gottesmans are Galicians, which means that in their home religion is lived in the spirit of a potent magic; it has nothing whatever to do with ethics. The old man Gottesman regards me as a destroyer of the Jewish faith and deplores the fact that his daughter Helen who married a Borgenicht attended the Teachers Institute when it was first organized. He warned her so I was told, that he would disinherit her if she became a member of the SAJ.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



The purpose for which the old man Borgenicht came to see me was to ask me to write a letter to Judge McLaughlin to suspend sentence against his son-in-law, the lawyer Finkelstein who had confessed to having swindled people out of their money and having forged mortgages. This lawyer is the son of a popular old Orthodox rabbi in Brooklyn and brother of Dr. Louis Finkelstein of the Seminary. I do not think that I am altogether prejudiced when I maintain that Talmudism with its baneful influence in divorcing religion from honesty has had a great deal to do with making such a crime possible despite all the social pressure that was bound to militate against it in a household such as that of the Finkelsteins. Every time I see Louis Finkelstein I imagine I see a Jekyll and Hyde, with the Talmudic training and background keeping the Hyde in him alive.

The sermon on Saturday, the first day of Sukkot was an interpretation of the Sukkah ceremony as a symbol of the simple life. Insofar as the Bible represents a revolt against the artificialities of civilization that ceremony can become a means of accentuating this "tendency" in the Bible. The two elements in civilization that give rise to the yearning to go back to nature are artificial wants and artificial social distinctions. A want is artificial when it can be supplied only at the sacrifice of honesty and justice. A social distinction is artificial when it is not based upon functions but upon such adventitious factors as possessions, parentage, etc.

This thought ought to prove fruitful insofar as it implies the identity of natural and moral. But I did not venture to point out this implication to the audience for fear they would scarcely understand it and would therefore be bored. As it was I was no means pleased with the reaction of the people. Perhaps I was too stilted in my delivery, due to the fact that I had not given sufficient preparation to the sermon, or to some temperamental indisposition

that I had not taken the trouble to overcome. I suspect that the latter cause rather than the former was responsible for my stilted delivery, for on the second day of Sukkot (Sunday) when I had a much smaller attendance (about 110-120 people) on account of the rain, I spoke with far more fluency and ease on the subject of organization of Jewish life. On the other hand, the frequent reiteration of the ideas in the second day's sermon may have much to do with the ease with which I spoke it.

Last night I was about to stray into the meeting which was taking place at the SAJ where Rosenblatt and a few others of the membership committee were in session. They had invited all seat holders who on Yom Kippur eve expressed an interest in the SAJ by turning in cards which had been placed in the racks of their seats. Of the eighteen who handed in such cards only six were present at the meeting last night. I learned this from Simmons whom I met coming out as I was about to go in. He told me that he took it upon himself to explain the nature of the SAJ and what it was trying to accomplish. As a result of his explanation all the six became members.

When I met Simmons it was about 10:45. Instead of going into the meeting he and I took a stroll and then I took him up to my house. He stayed until 12:45. The main burden of his remarks was that he must put his business in good working order before undertaking communal work. His idea is that the SAJ ought to receive a large sum of money from a few people so that I should be given a free hand to carry out some of my plans. He assured me that as soon as his business is in good running order he will "devote himself to helping me and Palestine." (I am using his phrase.) But who has the patience to keep on forever waiting and hoping without seeing tangible results? When Ferlman, the new executive director asked me yesterday morning

to tell him to whom he should turn to organize the necessary committees to assume responsibility for the various lecture courses he would like to institute, I was unable to help him. I understand that Joe Levy, despite his promise last year to retrench in his business ventures, has involved himself more than ever. In his inordinate greed he seems to have bitten off more than he can chew. Since he gives his leisure time to no other institution I had hoped to get some work from him for the SAJ but now that he has his financial troubles again, I can not count upon him either.

This morning I had the fright of my life. As I was eating breakfast and Lena was having her cup of coffee, Selma ran in in a state of terrible fright and said that she swallowed a needle. Lena at once got hysterical and I ran down for the doctor on the ground floor of the house. When I was downstairs Lena called down that the needle was found. Selma imagined she had swallowed it.

How in one moment all that which constitutes our life may tumble about as like a house of cards! The thoughts that naturally passed through my mind in those few minutes of the fright are too horrible for words.

I can hardly credit the news transmitted to me by Felix M. Warburg to the effect that he received word from Dean Russell that my request was granted. Last week I received a reply from Russell in which he expressed his willingness to adopt the alternate plan which I suggested in my memorandum to him. According to that plan the Teachers Institute students would get their BS degree in five years after they leave high school without having to spend most of their time in college. One full year at Teachers College would be all that would be required of them after they would get through with

the four years' course at the Institute, including two years of experience in teaching. Not being sure that this was what Russell meant in his letter I wrote to him last Friday to make sure that I understood him aright. If this message of Warburg's is an answer to my letter of last Friday, then the Teachers Institute will be lucky indeed.

Last Friday I went to Columbia to give my first lecture of the course announced as Hebrew 109. That is the course which Dr. Gottheil asked me to give. I was very much disappointed to find seven students in a dingy overheated room in Business Hall. These seven students were amost motley group. Rabbi Neulander, Kesselman, a graduate of the Teachers Institute, and young girls like Misses Fidanque and Kussy. I am very much in doubt whether I shall continue with the course. The enrollment will have to be much larger to make it worth while for me to spend the time.

I am beginning to realize that the method of interpretation which I have worked out for the Bible is essentially aesthetic in character. For according to Leo Stein aesthetic seeing is seeing a series of objects as a totality with a focal center as the center of reference. Thus by reading the Pentateuch from the standpoint of Israel's destiny and function in the world it presents an aesthetic unity into which the fragments that Higher Criticism has broken it into are fused.

* * * *

I have just come back from a meeting of the Governing Council of the Z.O.A. Before ^{we} ~~we~~ were far advanced with the meeting Harry Sachar, member of the Zionist World Executive at Palestine, arrived. Morris Rothenberg, who presided, called upon him to say something to those present. At first he was not going to say anything, but when urged again he unfolded the story of the predicament in which the Zionist work is placed by reason of the failure which threatens the American Zion Commonwealth. The business of the meeting was then set aside and the question taken up how to save the Amzic. The impotence of the organization then became apparent to me and I felt foolish that I had entertained dreams about the organization being able to do cultural work.

I have very little time to go on describing how my heart sank when I was brought face to face with our extreme poverty in resources and men. I shall have to render a report at the meeting which is to take place a week from Sunday and I must utilize the opportunity to do all I can to bring about a new spirit in the movement. It is a tremendous responsibility and I pray to God that I may meet it ably.

I shall try to formulate the lines along which I want to address the meeting. In choosing me as Chairman the Adm. Com. was not interested in conferring honors. I take it that the reasons that moved them to elect me had nothing whatever to do with any personal merit or achievement, which even if I laid claim to, would be totally irrelevant to the question of why I was chosen to head the Administrative Com. For were personal merit or achievement determining factors I am certain there were others who should have had precedence over me and who would have been willing to serve. The only way in which I can account for myself in this position is that in the present contingency I do not function as a person but as a symbol. In the capacity of a symbol I could be employed by the Organization as a means of giving notice to all and sundry of its intentions for the future.

I therefore owe it to you to define myself as a symbol and explain in what way I should like that capacity of mine to be exploited for the good of the Organization and the movement which it seeks to further.

My capacity as a symbol is derived from specific associations with which I have become identified. They are as follows:

1. I happened to have taken an active part in the efforts of the Peace Committee last June, and
2. My calling as a rabbi brings with it definite implications as to the conception of Zionism I am bound to hold once I believe in Zionism.
3. Being a novice as an office holder in the organization I bring with me the naivete which makes me ask why and wherefore, where veterans have stopped asking questions.

* * * *

Monday, October 8, 1928

Last Thursday morning the Z.O. tendered a reception to Viscount Allenby who stopped for a few days in this city on his way to the Annual Convention of the American Legion, which is to take place at Houston, Texas. Herman Bernstein, who is a member of the Admin. Com. was entrusted with the task of arranging with Dr. Finlay to make it possible for the Z.O. to arrange this reception to Allenby. When the question arose as to who should represent the Z.O. on that occasion Mr. Leaf of Philadelphia nominated Judge Lewis. The reception was scheduled for 9:45 in the morning.

I am such a greenhorn at these functions that I imagined there was to be a breakfast and that I might be called upon to give some opening prayer or benediction. Of course I went to the trouble of formulating what I would say, in case I would be called on. When I came to the Ambassador Hotel where the ceremonies were to take place

I was surprised to find no tables, but simply a lot of chairs arranged in regular order for a meeting, with a dais and speaker's table at the head of the room. When Herman Bernstein arrived with Allenby, he invited the speakers to the platform. Although I took no part in the program I was also asked to sit on the platform. The speakers were Herman Bernstein, Maskansky, Judge Lewis, Louis Marshall, Nathan Strauss, Harry Sacher and Dr. Findley were also on the platform.

Friday morning I had a conference with Dr. Benderly. I had Dr. Honor with me and I also asked Brogin whom I happened to meet at the Bureau to sit in. The main subject for which I called this conference was the question: How the work which Benderly was doing with his select group of Hebrew High School graduates would affect the progress of the Teachers Institute. Honor had pointed out to me before I came to the conference that Benderly was taking away the best material from the T.I. and that, in addition, the proportion of male to female students was growing dangerously small. As a matter of fact, the decreasing number of boys that are taking advantage of Jewish educational courses is an evil that is flagrant already in the High School classes. But with this course which Dr. Benderly is conducting personally, and for which he takes the pick of the boys, the T.I. is apt to become a mere girls' seminary. (Incidentally, I may mention the fact that the predominance of the feminine element in the T.I. has prevented me from making the T.I. my chief interest as it should have been. Girls in the home, girls in the school. That was too much for me. I want to come to grips with the tougher human material present in the male.)

When I told Benderly of my fears about the T.I. and asked him whether it would not be possible to have the special group he is training also do work at the T.I. he broke out into a harangue in which he pooh poohed the suggestion I made. He was quite angry at

the thought that he should be asked to surrender that group to the T.I. and asserted that he alone was qualified to give them what they needed in order to become leaders in Jewish life. He characterized Levine and Chertoff as unfit to teach and inspire the young people in the Institute. He told Bragin and Honor to their faces that they lacked the necessary personality to exercise the proper influence upon such as those whom he undertook to train. I squirmed in my seat to hear men ~~reply~~ so characterized to their faces. The very fact, however, that they had nothing to say in reply, proved the truth of his characterization. He said that I did possess the necessary qualities to train these young people but that I did not have the time to give to them. He continued in this strain for half an hour quoting me in the course of his remarks against myself, by reminding me that I had always agreed with him that the Seminary was incapable of giving its students the proper kind of guidance and inspiration for their calling, and that if I had the chance I would have taken a few of the best students in hand and trained them myself. He certainly had the better of me in the argument. There was nothing further to be said. He's got to have his way. It is only a question how he can possibly carry such a tremendous burden. My admiration and love for him have not been diminished in the least, although he refused to grant my request.

Friday I met for the third and last time the class at Columbia that was taking the course I had undertaken to give. I should have known beforehand that the demand would be small and that the group that would register would be exceedingly heterogeneous. It was my constitutional inability to say no that led me to yield to Gottheil's request. But when I was confronted with the class and saw how few registered for it and how dissimilar the students were in their age and background I decided to give it up. With all the work that I have to do it would have been ridiculous to fritter away my energies on so futile a task.

On Sabbath Shmini Azeret I concluded the series of talks I gave during the Holiday season on the Reconstruction Program. I appealed once again to those present to join the SAJ or if they were already members to get their friends to join it. As long as I am connected with the SAJ I must make a success of it. With the members themselves doing practically nothing to build it up I deem it necessary to get off my high horse and do the dirty work of soliciting members.

Sunday afternoon Dr. Shalom Spiegel called. He is a prepossessing young man of fine scholarly attainments who, before he came to this country, lived in Palestine and taught in Biram's school in Haifa. As a student in the University of Vienna, I believe, he took a secularist interest in Hebraic culture. But before long he became dissatisfied with the rootlessness of modern Hebraic culture and had since developed a leaning toward the traditional religious aspect of Jewish civilization.

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10,
Wednesday, October 24, 1928

I began this morning the courses in Midrash and Homiletics. In Midrash I shall read this year Shir Hashirim Rabbah. In Homiletics I shall give the course on the Interpretation of Genesis.

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Friday, October 12, 1928

At the meeting of the Governing Council of the Z.O. Administrative Com. Dr. Rubniow suggested that I come to see him. I called on him yesterday at his office at 111 Fifth Ave. He unfolded to me the story of the Palestine Securities Corporation. That company was organized about two years ago (I believe) for the purpose of floating Palestine securities. Bernard Rosenblatt became president with a salary of \$7500 per year and Eman. Neumann (the man whom I formerly regarded as one of the few disinterested devotees of the Movement) was appointed

Vice president with a salary of \$5000. The actual securities sold amounted to \$130,000. The cost of selling these securities was \$49,000. The Corporation owed those who issued the securities \$25,000 which they failed to turn in to them. Messelman was sent from Palestine to collect that amount, failing which, he threatened to sue the Z.O. which backed the corporation and was the owner of a part of the whole of the stock. Rosenblatt and Neumann managed to scrape together about \$22,000 toward their debt. They still owed about \$3,500 for which they gave notes. These notes, about 15, are endorsed by the Z.O.

There is not a single mention of the Palestine Securities business in the books of the Z.O. Rubinow, therefore, refuses to sign the checks in payment of the notes as they become due.

Had this scandalous affair been ~~known~~ known to the judges last spring they would undoubtedly have made it impossible for the administration to be returned to office. Fortunately for the opinion I expressed with regard to Lipsky in my letter to him on his arrival is not contravened by these transactions. His hands are absolutely clean. But his absolute lack of a sense of financial responsibility proves him to be woefully unfitted as a leader of the Zionist movement which involves some understanding of financial ethics.

I imagine that the first reaction upon Rubinow when he discovered this ugly piece of business was that he ought to resign. He learned of it as Matten the accountant handed him a check for \$250 to be signed in payment of a note for the Palestine Sec. Corp. Only after a long cross examination of Malkin did Rubinow succeed in eliciting all the details. Rubinow's story had a similar effect upon me, but upon second thought I realized that such a step would discredit either me or the movement. If I were to say nothing I would appear to be acting irresponsibly; if I were to disclose the facts I would hurt the movement irretrievably.

As Rubinow and I were walking home he told me of a rumor that has been spread by the half-wit "Hanna" who has been featur^{ing} as the jester of the Organization in all the years of its existence. The rumor is the effect that on Sunday, Oct. 14 Lipsky would declare his intention to discontinue accepting a salary. He expects to make his living by going into some kind of journalistic work.

This "Hanna" by the way, has really been serving in the capacity of a stool-pigeon and helpful person in case of trouble. He was sent to the last convention at a cost of \$130 to the special defense fund ~~he~~ raised to fight the opposition. He was the one who carried out the orders to lead in the riotous protest at the convention after the talk I gave on the work of the Peace Committee.

* * *

Monday, October 15, 1928

This last weekend has been crowded with activity. As a result of the successful perform^{ance} of the tasks that devolved upon me I feel considerably stronger and more self-confident than usual. The tasks I refer to were the following:

Friday night I spoke at the inaugural Friday night services at the Educational Alliance Building, E. Bway and Jefferson St. I enjoyed the experience immensely, not only the speaking, but my stay Friday night at the lower East Side. I visited the synagogue on Eldridge St. near Division where I ^{had} celebrated my Bar Mizvah and where I ^{had} attended services and studied with my father from my twelfth to my fifteenth year. I fed my eyes on every part of the building. There were the same lofty vaults in the ceiling, the same stain^{ed} glass windows, the same lighting fixtures, with the large chandelier suspended from the center of the ceiling by a long thin pipe which I used to be afraid would snap. On the almemar I recognized the bench which served as a container for talethim and prayer books. Boys rushed up to it now and

then to snatch a prayer book as of old. The box of snuff tobacco was still there, and every once in a while some one would help himself to it in the course of the prayers. In fact the atmosphere was so strong with the smell of snuff tobacco that my nose was irritated. This sensation I do not recall having felt there as a boy. I also walked down to what is usually called the vestry. It was there I used to pray week days and study Talmud with father. I looked long at the seat near the Ark where he and I used to sit and engage in involved Talmud discussions. I recalled the joy and the pride that would fill his heart when I would put a question to him that had been asked by some of the famous commentators. As I try to note specifically the peculiar nature of the sadness which overcame me during my visit to the synagogue I find that it had much in common with what Aristotle says ~~in~~ is the effect of seeing a tragedy enacted on the stage. There seems to be much in common between the sense of the bygone and that experienced when seeing a tragic play. There is something histrionic in living over mentally the experience of one's childhood and youth, and it is naturally of a sad character since no achievement can measure up to the dreams of the possible.

I had been provided with a "meal ticket" which entitled me to a free meal at the vegetarian restaurant, 171 E. Bway. I enjoyed the unusualness of the meal and the strangeness of the surroundings. From time to time a little boy or girl with copies of the Jewish Day would come into the restaurant to sell papers.

After that I rested for an hour on a bench in Seward Park. Near me sat an old man who was telling his neighbor all about his children, their business, their troubles, their indifference to things Jewish, and he ended up with singing to himself in a low tone melodies from the liturgy, and folk songs in Yiddish, and ended up with the song of the magician intoning some of his own concoctions.

At the Educational Alliance there were seven and eight hundred people. The majority were young men. I learned later that most of these young men belong^{ed} to Young Israel, an organization of Jewish fundamentalists. There were about fifty old women, and the same number of old men. Of young women there must~~have~~ have been about 75 to 100. My talk was a summary of the sermons I had given on the holidays at the SAJ. I called it "The Test of Jewish Loyalty." I held the attention of the audience, yet when Lasker who conducted the services called for questions no one asked any. That was probably^{due} to their not having been given a chance to collect their thoughts after I got through.

I had intended to walk back as far as I could, thinking that if I would find the walking a strain I would ride back the rest of the way. I personally did not believe that there ^{was} ~~is~~ any value in insisting upon prohibitions like carrying and riding. It is only out of a desire to be in a position to work in the field of Judaism that I conform to the usual practice of abstaining from riding. ~~xxxxxx~~ At the conclusion of the service Lasker made the gratuitous remark to the people that I would walk all the way home. In addition, one of the graduates of the Seminary, Ed Horowitz, insisted upon accompanying me home. I therefore had to walk, whether I wanted to or not.

When I wrote the foregoing account of my experiences last Friday night I was still in the mood of elation which was the immediate effect of what I had regarded as personal successes. That was this morning. Now after midnight as a result of what has transpired in the meantime I find myself again in the slough of despond. The only performances about which I still have no regrets are the opening lessons in my course with the Teachers Institute classes, and the address I gave at the gathering of the staff ^{some} students and a number of alumni. That was the first Hebrew address I ever gave extemporaneously and it

was not at all bad. I spoke fluently and made no mistakes. The teaching of the lessons in Hebrew also came more easily than I had expected, especially as I had not had any time to prepare the lessons.

I also want to place to my credit the way I presided at the meeting of the Administrative Comm. of the ZOA on Saturday night at Olcott Hotel. I kept the meeting strongly in hand, and steered it effectively.

But now comes the less cheerful part of my tale. First, my effort to make the Sabbath services interesting did not prove successful. The Sidrah being the first one in Genesis, I read Whitman's Passage to India in the hope that it would enable the people to catch the spirit of the poet in his attitude toward the mystery of life all about us. Lena, however, told me that she couldn't grasp the meaning of most of what I read. Furthermore, instead of giving a sermon on the readings from the Bible, I tried to give the first of a series of information talks on the evolution of religion for the purpose of making the Bible appear more human and more interesting. I somehow was unable to get the proper response from the audience. I haven't the least idea whether they want such talks or they don't. They are a most exasperatingly unresponsive crowd. Of course, under such circumstances I could not be in good form. The content was not well organized nor the language fluent. These defects, however, were the effect and not the cause of the apparent lack of interest, because when I started I was for a time in good form.

My most conspicuous performance of which I was at first quite proud, but on account of which I am now crestfallen, was the part I played yesterday morning at the meeting of the National Exec. Comm. of the ZOA, which took place at the Waldorf Astoria. The formal report of the Adm. Comm. was read by Dr. Rongy (whom both Lipsky and Weisgal have characterized as a moron.) I followed with my address

which was very well received. Then came the consideration of the question whether or not to confirm the decision of the Admin. Comm. to change the Yiddish paper "Das Folk" from a weekly into a monthly. I had been under the impression that sinister influences had been at work to override the decision of the Adm. Comm. The effort to save \$12,000 which was not doing any appreciable good would thus have been frustrated. After some discussion a vote was taken; 38 were against changing it to a monthly and 36 for. This boiled me up and I quietly ~~rose~~ from my seat and said to Elihu Stone who was presiding, that I was through and having said that I left the room. At once there was a hubub and a demand that a roll call be taken. In the meantime a number of those present pleaded with me to return. When I returned the roll call was taken and the vote stood 44 against and 55 for changing the paper into a monthly. My display of temper no doubt helped to defeat the sinister forces, but as I realize now I should have used other tactics. A show of temper should be resorted to only as a very last measure.

What upset me this evening was first the difficulty in getting H.L. Simmons to answer me whether he would help me to secure the \$5,000 for the Hebrew Art Club, and then the conversation which he had with me when he finally did call me up after having learned from his secretary how indignant I felt that I could not get him on the phone. He had nothing but the most discouraging news to give of the meeting which took place at Spielberg's home Friday night to consider the organization of the SAJ Chapter and he definitely stated that I should not expect to secure the \$5,000.

Weisgal came to see me this evening about fixing up my address for the next issue of the New Palestine. I am happy to say that as a result of having heard his side of the story of his relations to the movement and the Organization, I shall no longer include him among the sinister influences in the organization. Perhaps I shall, in time experience a similar change of heart also about Mrs. Archibald Silverman, Spicehandler, Kramer, et al. In the meantime I cannot but regard them as a menace to the ^{cause} ~~cause~~ of Zionism.

* * *

Wednesday, October 17, 1928

The Committee on Law appointed by the Rabbinical Assembly met this afternoon. It continued the discussion of the question raised by Jacob Kohn concerning the right of a "Kohen" rabbi to officiate at funerals and study medicine. Finkelstein had sent around a memorandum giving his opinion from a legal standpoint. I presented my paper in which I took the attitude that the status of the priest should be maintained only for purposes of services in the ^{synagogue} ~~synagogue~~ and for the ceremony of *f.99*. The maintenance of impunity laws was not defensible in view of our giving up the belief in the restoration of the sacrificial system. I was glad to see that I was able to give expression to such views without being regarded as disloyal to the principles of the Seminary.

This evening the members of the Administrative Committee met mainly to listen to Weizman who arrived last night with the Ile de France.

After his introductory remarks in the course of which in his inimitably urbane fashion he paid both me and Dr. Rubinow high compliments for our having been drawn in to Zionist work, he spoke of the prospect in Palestine which he described as quite hopeful.

The items upon which he based his inference were 1) the successful negotiations with the Arabs pertaining to the Beisan region, whereby the Jews will ultimately be enabled to buy land in that section; 2) the concession in the Dead Sea, which is to be granted to Novemirsky; 3) the pipe line to Haifa; 4) the building of a harbor and the negotiations to have native labor instead of foreign labor build it. The minimum wage of 20 piastres per day instead of 12 which cheap labor was ready to accept is being urged upon the government. The Labor federation, together with the League is being called in to bring its influence to bear. The land is making economic progress at present though at a slow pace; but once the improvements named will be introduced there is reason to believe that the tempo of the progress will become rapid. The significance of a Jewish Haifa reenforced by a Jewish Hinterland will minimize the danger that lurks in a Palestine Congress which may come in three or four years.

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Thursday, October 28, 1928

However little progress I may be making with the SAJ group on 86 Street, there is promise of the SAJ program winning adherents in other quarters. About two weeks ago I received a letter from Dr. Winckler of Los Angeles that he was about to form an SAJ chapter in his congregation. The other day I received an inquiry from a man in Detroit by the name of Ehrlich about our work. Tonight Rabbi Signer of Manhattan Beach, whom I have been helping with his sermons for the last year or so has interested some of his trustees in the plan of having his congregation accept the SAJ program and reorganize its services in accord with that spirit. He brought with him tonight to my house Messrs. Zola, L. Marder and Aronson. They were impressed when I pointed out to them that the SAJ was furnishing the Conservative movement in Judaism with a definite program. It looks as though

the Manhattan Beach congregation will be the first congregation outside the original one that will have formally adopted the SAJ platform. If that will prove to be the case then my efforts have surely not been in vain.

* * *

Thursday, October 25, 1928

Lena and I spent the greater part of Friday and Saturday in Coney Island at the Half-Moon. The freedom from routine gave me an occasion to read Klatzkin's ^{"פ'יו"ן} ~~p. 10~~. I cannot say that his presentation of the Jewish problem added to the pleasure of my vacation. The conclusion which he arrives at that the Jews in the Diaspora ought to enter upon no compromises with their environment and that all such compromises are only a means of hastening the death that is inevitable had the depressing effect of the reminder that a day must come when each of us will be laid in his grave. Like the latter reminder, there are certain logical and physical inevitables which life must forget most of the time, if it is to carry on at all. That is the very trait of life to ignore, to mock at, to leap over death and not to allow itself to be obsessed or paralyzed by it. Klatzkin would have the Jewish people so obsessed by the thought that it must die everywhere except in Palestine; that it is bound to become too faint to survive even in Palestine. His ~~strictures~~ strictures on Ahad Ha-Am are based on his misinterpretation of what Ahad Ha-Am attempts in his various generalizations concerning the spirit of Judaism. Misinterpreting Ahad Ha-Am to mean that these generalizations, which ascribe to Judaism values of a universal character, constitute the *raison d'être* of Judaism. Klatzkin has no difficulty in proving that Ahad Ha-Am repeats the mistake of the Reformists. But that is not the case at all, Klatzkin first puts up a man of straw and then makes much ado in knocking him down. As to Klatzkin so to Ahad Ha-Am the justification in Judaism

is in its individuality. That should not prevent him from discovering in Judaism values of a universal character. Klatzkin forgets that the more truly universal the spirit is in its functioning the more individual it is. Klatzkin still labors under the mistaken identification of individual with individualistic.

There are, however, a good many stimulating notions in Klatzkin's analysis. He is right in stressing the fact that no achieved value in Judaism can constitute a *raison d'etre* for remaining a Jew. The conclusion which I have been in the habit of drawing from this fact is that the *raison d'etre* of the Jewish people is to be found not in what it has achieved but in what it promises to achieve if given a chance to function normally. Insofar as a living being needs justification that justification must be based upon the future and not upon the past.

What he says about Jewish law is vitiated by his failure to distinguish between ceremonial and civil law. Nevertheless he senses correctly the part that ceremonies played in preserving Jewish life, though in his entire treatment of the subject he seems to be entirely unaware that the hold which the *mizvot* had on the Jew was due to his belief that they were an indispensable means to salvation. For that matter, Klatzkin overlooks entirely that the real crux of the problem of Jewish life is the desuetude of the conviction that only through the Jewish people could any one achieve salvation. Nowadays the Jew like most thinking people in the world, has changed his conception of salvation. How to relate remaining a Jew to salvation as we now conceive it -- that in essence is the problem of Judaism.

Another thought to which I was led in reading his book was that by stressing the Jewish civilization rather than the nationality of the Jewish people as the object to be conserved and developed we might avoid being driven to the repugnant conclusion that sharing in

the life of the nation of which we are citizens we are sinning against the Jewish people. I am sick and tired of this business of loyalties. Loyalty is absolutism in the field of morals. It is that which prevents morality from ever having an esthetic appeal. I am interested in conserving ^{and} developing a civilization because in being the unique incarnation of the collective life of a people it is as much an esthetic object as any living thing or work of art. To be sure there are certain conditions that have to be met in order to render a civilization creative, the chief one being social interaction and organization.

On the other hand I avoid the mistake against which Klatzkin warns us, that of basing the *raison d'être* of the civilization upon certain universal values. I agree with him in accepting a civilization as an end in itself.

Saturday night I saw the performance of Sholom Asch's *Kiddush Hashem* at the Jewish Art Theatre, under the direction of Maurice Schwartz. It is remarkable how much esthetic potentiality lies dormant in the Jewish civilization. If we only had a few more men of the type of Maurice Schwartz it would not be so hard to be a Jew.

Monday night the SAJ Board met at Harry Liebovitz's home at the Hotel Park Central. He had a cold and didn't want to leave his room. At first he was going to postpone the meeting altogether, but then he realized that there were important matters pending which could not afford to wait. The meeting was comparatively well attended. It opened with a statement by H.L. Simmons that he must be absolved from all responsibility for any SAJ work for the next few months. He displayed quite some feeling in making this statement, from which it was evident that he felt keen regret in having to give up the work. Time and again he had avowed a genuine desire to contribute both time and

means
/to the SAJ movement, but the condition of his business does not permit him to do what he would like. His action seemed to leave the matter of the SAJ chapter once more in the air. But he then proceeded to insure its organization by asking Harry Liebovitz to accept the chairmanship at least temporarily and to go on with the organization. H. Liebovitz who is by no means a well man, consented to serve.

The discussion then took a very peculiar turn. Rosenblatt, who is chairman of the committee on membership and who has not been able to accomplish anything since ~~he~~ has held that office, asked for cooperation in his effort to secure members for the congregation. The trustees who are interested in the chapter objected on the ground that a campaign for membership in the congregation would interfere with their efforts to ~~xx~~ secure members for the chapter. For a long time the debate continued. I sided with Rosenblatt and asked that the organization of the chapter wait about two months until the congregation will have acquired an appreciable number of new members. Charles Cohen and Spielberg would not listen to any arguments. They made it clear that they have no interest whatever in the congregation. If H.L. Simmons had stayed over to take part in the debate he would in doubt have sided with them. I mention these facts to indicate that despite all our efforts to arouse an interest in the element of worship we seem to be making no headway whatever. If a man like Charles Cohen who has all his life been brought up on the assumption of services as of central significance for Judaism wants to discover other means of self-expression as a Jew, what likelihood is there of those who have a tenuous connection with services ever finding them indispensable. When I mentioned that the Manhattan Beach Congregation was experimenting with its services, Cohen replied that in their eagerness to get hold of something to interest them they were willing to try anything; but we must wait for the outcome of the experiment to see whether their interest in services would be an abiding one.

The upshot was that the protagonists of the chapter won their point.

Tuesday morning I spent some time with Rabbi Signer on formulating a Friday night service for the Manhattan Beach congregation. The principle was to retain the present framework which accentuates the following ideas -- God in nature, the manifestation of His love for Israel by giving them a knowledge of His law, affirmation of allegiance to God and His Law, God as Redeemer, as Helper and as Sovereign. Into this framework new material is to be poured every week in the form of selections for recital, song and responsive reading.

Tuesday afternoon Dr. Bernstein of Dos Yiddishe Folk called. He told me of the various attacks launched against me by the Yiddish papers for ~~xxx~~ having been instrumental in changing Dos Yiddishe Folk from a weekly to a monthly. I explained to him that it was not that the paper was in Yiddish that led me to show my displeasure at the vote of the National Exec., but that the National Exec. showed such disregard for the Governing Council and Administrative Committee as to override the very first decision presented at the meeting. Dr. Bernstein drew up a statement to that effect which appeared in today's Jewish Morning Journal.

It was with extreme delight that I learned last night that the Hadassah referendum on the question of participation in the UPA campaign in terms of equality brought the following returns: 15,000 for going with the UPA campaign and 5000 against. I believe that my going in the Administrative Board and my statement, "Let there be peace" which appeared in the New Palestine, contributed a good deal to this result. Of one thing I am quite sure. If I had not taken

up the negotiations with the National Board of the Hadassah there never would have been any referendum.

The one achievement which holds out promise of proving in time to be of utmost significance is, I believe, the formation of the Council for the Advancement of Judaism. This morning the committee of nine appointed at the suggestion of those who took part in the conference which took place at the SAJ House last June met at the Sulzberger Room of the Federation Building, 71 West 47 Street. Present were Benderly, Honor, Jacob Kohn, Max Raisn, Henry Hurwitz, S.JKarpf, J. Scharfstein and I. The only one that had promised to come but was unavoidably prevented was Lowenstein. In my opening remarks I set forth that the aim of the Council should be to maintain Jewish life whole and creative. This time I seemed to have struck it right. That purpose was adopted without any discussion. We then proceeded to formulate to plan of organization. We agreed that we want to limit the Council only to those who had something to say and were not afraid to say it. The publication of the views expressed was emphasized as of paramount importance. It should be our aim to develop into an organ of Jewish opinion. Hurwitz suggested that we should call in from time to time those at the helm of Jewish affairs to exchange ideas with them.

The question of the name was settled without much ado. Kohn objected to our being identified as an SAJ group. In order, however, that our connection with the SAJ be retained and somehow indicated we should adopt the name Council for the Advancement of Judaism. I readily assented to this suggestion, but stipulated that the SAJ Review be accepted as our official organ.

We are to meet once a month. We also decided upon the program for the next meeting. All this was enacted within two hours' time.

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(pp. 106- 110, Wednesday, October 3, 1928, Thursday, November 1, 1928, Monday, November 5, 1928 all written in Hebrew)

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Wednesday, November 7, 1928

I must go back to English. This vacillation in the matter of language reflects my agitated state of mind. I flit from book to book, from subject to subject finding nowhere anything to hold my attention, and when at last I do become interested in a particular problem I cannot find the necessary amount of time to do any creative thinking or writing on it. The room in which I keep my books and where my desk stands is more of an alcove than a room. It has one window which admits only enough light to irritate me with the inadequacy due to the ugly gray building across the street shutting out the sun. The sun may be shining brightly in the park alongside our house, but in my study I have to turn on the electric light. The conflict of lights when I leave the blind up, or the artificial night when I put the blind down upsets me. Why should I not have that elementary comfort of having at least the ordinary use of daylight to work by? This confusion of light and darkness and this uncertainty what to do in the continual interplay of shadows in the room are symbolic of my state of mind whenever I try to do any work in the house. I run into the park for escape. I am writing this on a bench with dozens of children in baby carriages and on skates and tricycles crowding the walk in front of me and emitting all kinds of noises.

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Tuesday, November 13, 1928

Is Judaism in America to function merely as an antithesis to the thesis of a Christian America, and to disappear in a higher synthesis of an American religion when that thesis will become defunct and in no need of being offset?

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Wednesday, November 14, 1928

The Zionist organization seems to be completely demoralized. The last meeting of the Administrative committee which took place a week ago tonight was very poorly attended. Some of the most important chairmen were absent and failed to send in any reports. I nagged those present to bestir themselves to increase the membership of the organization but it was like trying to wake one who is soundly asleep in the middle of the night to attend to the furnace. The only tangible result accomplished at that meeting was to have gotten Abe Liebovitz to sign a note for \$20,000 which is to be discounted at a bank in order to pay off some of the debt against the Amzic which would otherwise have to go into bankruptcy. We had to give Abe L. a good word pumeling before he could be gotten to yield. He was given to understand that in all his guarantees to the UPA and in giving this note for \$20,000 he was not incurring the least risk. He never lost a cent of all the credit that he had underwritten. Yet he always keeps on repeating how deeply he was involved financially in the UPA as though God knows he was losing thousands of dollars a year on it.

In the course of the meeting I had occasion to give a little speech about the way we (I had in mind, of course, friend Liebovitz) were driving out of the organization the workers, so that we are at present so understaffed that it is impossible to do any work.

Since then the Organization has gone into retirement. Lipsky and a few of the officials have been busy with the UPA conference at

Boston, but as far as the Organization is concerned not a word has been breathed about the membership campaign which was supposed to open tomorrow. I can't understand why Lipsky should not be giving all of his time to the building up of the Organization. What is he doing all the time anyhow? I understand of course that if he had an opportunity of making a living outside of the Organization he would have resigned the presidency long ago. The analysis of him given in a book which just appeared by Analyticans "Jews Are Like This" is pitilessly accurate.

While nothing is being done to bring new life into the organization, a few Yiddish journalists and others of the old school Zionists are doing their utmost to have "Dos Yiddishe Folk" remain a weekly. They are trying to prevent the vote which changed it into a monthly from going into effect. Whether they are right or not, the fact remains that the only time one sees zeal displayed is when it is a question of keeping the expenditures high, but none of that is apparent when the means to meet the expenditures have to be provided.

Saturday morning the representatives of the Marshall group met with Weitzman and members of the Zionist Organization to discuss the resolutions of the Actions Committee passed at Berlin a few months ago. Weizman's secretary telephoned to me that the meeting had to be held at that time and he regretted that I was prevented from attending. I have since been notified of the result of the meeting as most favorable from the standpoint of the progress of the Jewish Agency. I must admit that holding such a conference Saturday morning offends good taste. Although I was very anxious to be present I could not very well be a party to such a slight to the Jewish Sabbath spirit. I am certain that some other time could have been found. It could have taken place in the afternoon just as well. The complete disregard of the Sabbath service is what hurts.

Sunday night I addressed the Friedlaender classes at a gathering which was held at the CJI. The address itself was good but it was marred by my having lost my temper at the beginning when a young couple kept on conversing and laughing while I was speaking. I do not know whether I acted properly in paying attention to them. Yet if I had gone on without minding them I imagine that the disorder would have grown, because the young people were inclined to be boisterous. Additional reason for being annoyed. Even the young people who display an interest in things Jews are frightfully ill-behaved.

Wachman's daughter who was about to be married last year to the Gentile Tom turned up again. She came to me yesterday with a telegram which she had received from him saying that he was seriously ill and asking her to come to him to St. Louis. From her story of what has transpired since I last saw her it seems that her decision not to go on with the marriage was not by no means final. She evidently merely meant to play for time hoping that in the meanwhile her father seeing her sister's happiness with the gentile she married might become reconciled to her marrying Tom. The father, on the other hand, sensing this to be at the bottom of her decision has been resentful of what he considers her selfishness in not giving up entirely the idea of marrying Tom. There has consequently been a great deal of unhappiness in the Wachman home. What will happen to Wachman when she will let him know that she has married Tom I look forward to with dread. He might suffer a collapse or commit suicide. Abstractly speaking, what right has he to insist that she must yield to him and be governed by his wishes? Has she no right to her own life and to be happy in her own way? Yet, if God forbid such a thing would happen to me, wouldn't I be on the point of losing my reason?

I have read the "Unknown Sanctuary" by Aime Palliere thinking that if I knew what changed a Catholic into a Jew I might find an additional means of holding the Jew to Judaism. In that anticipation I was disappointed. I realize that Palliere is the type of person who finds supernatural revelation not only acceptable but indispensable to his outlook on life. It seems to me that if I had lived in an age when supernatural revelation was generally regarded in that light I would have been able to have Judaism supersede Christianity. That the Jewish philosophers of the middle ages were unable to make Judaism a universal religion, they they were unable to develop a scheme of salvation, such as worked out by Benamozeph the Italian Rabbi who influenced Palliere to become a Jew only proves that they possessed a very limited imagination and lacked all capacity for spiritual adventure. Not a one of them that had the spiritual audacity of an ~~Agassiz~~ Augustine. Benamozeph (who merely was repeating Samson Raphael Hirsch) with his Noachism was five centuries too late.

I am struggling with the idea that the mental attitude essential to being a Jew at the present time is neither that of faith nor of reason, but of esthetic experience. Of course I would insist upon the demands of reason being satisfied, but reason is only a negative prerequisite not a positive factor in building up Judaism. But what is esthetic experience. Of one thing I am sure, to wit: that it Hence, Judaism must begin with being a thing of the senses. / assumes the functioning of the senses. / We must see and hear and touch things of a specifically Jewish character in order to be a Jew.

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Monday, November 19, 1928

I have come across Art Young's "On My Way" which I have been reading with a great deal of gusto. Although it is not a connected story but a series of notes recorded daily for several months in succession it draws me on through its sheer human interest. Or shall I

say through my curiosity to see wherein a creative artist like Art Young can write himself down more interestingly than can I whose only claim to distinction is the habit of reaching out for things way beyond my grasp, a habit all too common and sterile? Perhaps what interests me in "On My Way" is the comforting thought I derive from it that recording one's experiences in unadorned fashion without ~~exaggerating~~ cudgelling one's brain to appear clever has an intrinsic value, thus finding in it a justification for this diary.

Last Wednesday I attended the monthly meeting of the Seminary Faculty. As usual it was a very much drawn out affair. If I could only think of some problem or subject of a talk that I might have to give I would not mind the many hours taken up at these sessions. But unfortunately the discussion not only interrupts any attempt at consecutive thought. It is actually thought benumbing.

I usually make it a rule not to bring up questions pertaining to the work in Homiletics, because I am always afraid of stirring up a hornet's nest. This time, however, I could not avoid mentioning problems that have presented themselves without being derelict in my duty. There was first the problem of what to do with the large number of second year men - about ten or twelve - who cannot possibly be given a chance to preach at the Sabbath morning services at the Seminary. Secondly, a number of men whose cultural background is inadequate and is in need of being supplemented by reading under guidance. I mentioned these problems to Adler before the meeting began, but he asked what I bring them at the meeting, which I did, with the result that I was named chairman of a committee to bring in recommendations as to what should be done. Finkelstein and Hyamson are the other members of the committee.

